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OPINION METER
This week's poll:

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ASIA

North Korea's much-anticipated rocket launch ends quickly in failure. ➤ PAGE 15

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The honoree is surrounded by family members and relatives during the dedication ceremony held March 30 on island where the new Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport was unveiled.

New name of Rota airport unveiled

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Rota officials officially unveiled the new Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport signage during a dedication ceremony held on March 30.

Attended by families and friends of the honoree, the event was also graced by dignitaries and guests, including Rota Mayor Melchor Mendiola and members of the legislative delegation headed by Senate President Paul Manglona, who all expressed their admiration and gratitude to the honoree's valuable contributions to the growth of the Commonwealth.

It was in September last year when then acting governor Eloy S. Inos signed into law Public Law 17-53 to rename the Rota International Airport to the "Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport" in recognition of his services to the island, the people of Rota, and the CNMI.

Manglona, 74, is the CNMI's longest serving elected official, having served as a congressman, senator, and former mayor of Rota. He served as the third lieutenant governor from 1990 to 1994 and as Rota mayor from

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'He's our hero'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

When Sinforosa T. Kaipat, 49, saw U.S. Marine Corps members at their doorway around 5am on Wednesday in Tacoma, Washington, she knew something was wrong but was hoping it was just a dream.

Kaipat

» Family awaits remains to arrive at Dover Air Force Base

Moments later, her worst fear was confirmed. Her 22-year-old son, Marine Lance Corporal Ramon Taisakan Kaipat, was killed while on combat patrol in the Helmand Province in Afghanistan on April 11.

Kaipat was on his second deployment to Afghani-

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DESPITE FEDS, LOCAL OFFICIALS' REQUESTS

Fitial retains work hour cuts for federally funded workers

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is not budging in his decision not to lift the 16-hour cuts among federally funded employees despite requests from federal and local officials, even though the administration said in late February that it was already considering the restoration of 80 work hours biweekly for these workers.

"It is a big mistake that the governor continues to not exempt these employees," Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (R-Saipan)

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BEATING THE DEADLINE

Rosalie Guevarra, left, administrative assistant for JTM Corp. doing business as Jhem's Restaurant, files the 2011 income tax returns of some of her colleagues at Finance's Division of Revenue and Taxation office in Dandan yesterday afternoon. The Division of Revenue and Taxation opened its doors yesterday, an austerity Friday, just to help prevent a surge in last-minute tax filings on Tuesday, April 17. Some 20,000 income tax returns are expected to be filed this year.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

PH and China recall protest to ease standoff

By TERESA CEROJANO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines and China agreed Friday to set aside their diplomatic protests in order to ease tensions over a naval standoff in the disputed South China Sea, a top Filipino diplomat said.

China also pulled back one of three surveillance ships at the Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines, Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert Del Rosario told reporters. But the impasse remained with two other Chinese ships facing off a Philippine coast guard vessel.

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Local

Over 140 PSS stakeholders grace parents' summit

MONETH G. DEPOSA

House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee chair Rep. Ramon Basa, standing, answers a question from participants during yesterday's PSS Legislative Summit for Parents held at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan. Others in photo are, from left, BOE fiscal and personnel affairs committee chair Tanya King, U.S. Congressional Delegate Gregorio Sablan, and Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs chair Sen. Jovita Taimanao.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

A total of 141 participants took part in the legislative summit for parents held yesterday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

Among the VIPs that attended the Public School System event were Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan, members of the Legislature, Board of Education and PSS leadership team, and officers and members of parents and teachers' associations of public schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan and Board of Education chair Marylou S. Ada told *Saipan Tribune* that they were elated to see the active involvement of education stakeholders, who took up several issues and conditions of public schools.

With the theme "Funding for Public Education in the CNMI," Ada said the board decided to conduct the assembly to inform the parents about the true fiscal state of education in the Commonwealth. She said many parents are confused about the "maintenance-of-effort" requirement that is always being cited in news reports about PSS.

To shed light on the true financial state of PSS, Commissioner Sablan, financial consultant Ed Tenorio, federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh, and finance director Richard Waldo opened the panel discussion, centering on the PSS budget, its challenges, and the goals that need to be accomplished.

Delegate Sablan joined House Ways and Means Committee chair Rep. Ramon Basa (Cov-Saipan), Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs chair Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota), and PSS fiscal, personnel and administrative chair Tanya King in presenting the fiscal condition of the CNMI and to answer questions and concerns of the crowd.

Galvin Deleon Guerrero, chairman of the BOE instructional services and assessment committee, gave a presentation on "21st Century Education Expectations" where he pointed out that parents should stop thinking that "schools should shoulder all responsibilities for their children." With the advent of computers and other modern technologies, learning can also be customized and personalized, he said.

An informal discussion on a myriad of issues and topics with PSS officials in small table groups followed the presentations.

Alleged Tinian 'ice' trafficker posts property bond

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

An ex-convict who was arrested again for allegedly selling methamphetamine or "ice" was allowed yesterday to post a $30,000 property bond.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo approved the posting of the property bond despite the Office of the Attorney General's strong opposition to modify the $30,000 cash bail for Luis Cruz Cepeda.

The OAG cited that Cepeda, who has two prior convictions, was arrested 12 times in the past for various offenses.

Govendo found Cepeda's sister acceptable as third-party custodian but told him that he cannot leave the house without his sister or her husband.

Arraignment will be on April 27 at 9am.

In the government's opposition to modify bail, assistant attorney general Eileen Escudero Wisor pointed out that the property bond and a third-party custodian are not enough to protect the community from Cepeda.

Wisor said that Cepeda continues to defy the law despite his two prior convictions for assault and battery. "It is clear defendant has no intention to follow the laws of the CNMI," she said, adding that the present case is Cepeda's second trafficking charge in eight years.

She noted that Cepeda's history with police contact includes 12 arrests involving charges of assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, disturbing the peace, riot, burglary, illegal possession of ammunition, and manufacturing, delivery, and possession of a controlled substance.

"The government maintains this combination of weapons, drugs, and violence suggests a pattern that could potentially be deadly," Wisor said.

Police arrested Cepeda on Wednesday for allegedly selling $100 worth of "ice" to a Drug Enforcement Task Force "cooperating source" at his farm on Tinian on Dec. 30, 2011.

Two plead not guilty to lying in US passport application

A woman and her brother-in-law have pleaded not guilty to charges that they lied in an application for a U.S. passport for her son.

Aifang Ye and her brother-in-law, Zhenyan Cheng, both Chinese nationals, were arraigned in federal court Thursday afternoon. They were each represented by their court-appointed counsels.

Ye and Cheng pleaded not guilty to the indictment charging them with conspiracy to make a false statement in a passport application and false statement in application for a U.S. passport.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona set the jury trial for June 11, 2012.

The two were released upon posting an unsecured bond.

Cheng allegedly posed as the father of his brother's child. Cheng's brother, Xigao Cheng, left the CNMI for China in September 2011 and has not returned to the Commonwealth, according to Immigration and Customs Enforcement special agent Ryan K. Faulkner in an affidavit filed in court.

According to the indictment, Ye and Cheng conspired to make it appear as if Cheng is the father of Ye's child in an application for a U.S. passport for the child. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

DUE TO RAPID CHANGES IN FUND'S SITUATION:

Recall of board consultant position in the offing

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The hiring of Heinz Hofschneider as consultant for the NMI Retirement Fund board may not push through as planned as a result of rapid changes in the situation of the pension agency.

Sixto K. Igisomar, former board of trustee chairman, hinted this to *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, adding that any decision to pursue contract negotiations with Hofschneider now lies with the board, to which he is no longer connected.

Igisomar's re-appointment to the Fund board has yet to be confirmed by the Senate.

"I've been gone from the board, and even it's just a short time, many things have happened with the Retirement Fund. Now the board is dealing with several issues such as court deadlines, receivership issue, and the Jorgensen case. Many things had transpired and I cannot answer now if the board still feels the need to hire for the position," said Igisomar.

Last week, trustee Bernardita Palacios, who was elected as the board's new chairperson, said that the board will take no action on the consultant issue until such time that Igisomar returns to the board.

The board approved the hiring of Hofschneider as board consultant in January this year, with Igisomar designated as the sole negotiator of the contract. Hofschneider was to be paid $70,000 per annum. Signing was then delayed due to unfinalized deliverables and conflict in schedules until it was overtaken by the expiration of Igisomar's term in March.

Igisomar pointed out, though, that "all will still depend" on the board of trustees. During the board's approval in January, Igisomar described the consultant position as "necessary" to meet the strategies laid out by the board to save the pension plan from collapse.

"The board can usually do whatever they feel is necessary and hiring for the position now depends on the short- and long-term goals of the Fund. If the board feels that we still need to hire a consultant, we will go that path. I have my faith and trust in the board," he added.

Experts have revealed that without the infusion of new funds to the pension plan, its lifespan is projected to last up to less than three years.

The Fund has about $253.3 million in its portfolio as of March. Its unfunded liability amounts to $900 million.

At present, the Fund has about 6,000 active and retiree members.

NMC Foundation reschedules golf tourney to June 30

The Northern Marianas College Foundation has announced that the date for the Annual NMC Foundation Open golf tournament has been rescheduled to Saturday, June 30, 2012. The event will take place at the West Course of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort

The 10th Annual NMC Foundation Open golf tournament is the organization's signature event that aims to raise funds to support and enhance the college's programs and services. The NMC Foundation is composed of volunteers in the community who are committed to improving and enhancing higher education opportunities for people in the CNMI.

With a shotgun start at 7am, the tournament is a medal play format. In addition to first, second and third place prizes for the different flights, the tournament will include Hole-In-One prizes. The lucky golfer who makes a hole-in-one shot at the designated sites will win significant prizes donated by the tournament's sponsors.

The entrance fee for the tournament is only $95 per player. Interested players are also invited to bring their family, friends, and playing partners for a fantastic day of fun and fundraising for a good cause. There will be six separate flight categories: Championship, A, B, C, Seniors, and Ladies.

Registration forms can be downloaded from www.nmcnet.edu, or picked up at the at Marianas Country Club, Saipan Country Club, Dan Dan Golf Range, Kingfisher Golf Links, Coral Ocean Point, and All Star Sporting Goods. Payments for the registration fee can be made at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort, Triple J Motors, and the NMC Cashier.

The NMC Foundation is also asking companies or individuals who can contribute Education Tax Credit, monetary, or in-kind donations to sponsor the tournament. A special sponsors' reception will be held before the tournament. Those interested in sponsoring the event or who are interested in registering to play can contact the Northern Marianas College at 234-5498 Ext. 1502.

For more information on how to donate to the NMC Foundation or to register to play, log on to www.nmcnet.edu or call 234-5498 Ext. 1050. ***(NMC)***

Guam National Guard to deploy teams to Afghanistan

Two teams of soldiers from the Guam Army National Guard are expected to mobilize and be deployed to Afghanistan this summer in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

One of the teams deploying is the 1990th Contingency Contracting Team, a four-person team, which will be providing contracting assistance to the Joint Support Theater Contracting Command.

Another team of Guam soldiers will be one of 20 teams deploying to serve as Security Force Advise and Assist Teams in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, according to Maj. Gen. Benny M. Paulino, Adjutant General of the Guam National Guard.

"The 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team received notice last year to prepare for possible mobilization. The bulk of the brigade is from the Hawaii Army Guard, but also includes infantry battalions from Guam and Arizona. That notice was rescinded and battalions belonging to Hawaii and Arizona were taken off the mobilization list," said Paulino.

The two Guam Guard units, the 1-294th Infantry Regiment and the F Company, 29th Support Battalion, are both organic units under the 29th IBCT. Although the brigade's initial mission was rescinded, the Guam units' mission remained intact and they were not taken off their mobilization status.

"Since then, the 29th IBCT has been re-missioned and they are now expected to mobilize 20 teams, which includes a team from [the Guam National Guard], to conduct this new security force advisory task. We anticipate receiving an alert order for the SFAATs within the next few weeks."

The Guam SFAAT will be composed of 12 Guam Guard soldiers.

Both the 1990th CCT and the SFAAT teams are expected to leave for their assigned mobilization station sometime in July, where they will be conducting combat training.

Mobilization of the 1-294th IN RGT is still on track, according to LTC George Charfauros, Guam National Guard deputy chief of staff for Operations and Plans, although the number of personnel to mobilize had changed. Late last year, Guard received word that the battalion's required numbers were going to be reduced to about two-thirds of the approximately 850 soldiers who were originally slated to be mobilized.

The 1-294th IN RGT is composed of soldiers from Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The addition of the 1990th CCT and SFAAT teams brings the total number of Guard soldiers to be mobilized, in support of OEF by early next year, to approximately 600 soldiers from Guam and the CNMI.

The anticipated activation of the 1-294th IN RGT can be considered as the largest group of reserve component troops to be mobilized and deployed from Guam. ***(PR)***

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Kagman High School Junior Prom Committee will be hosting a Co-ed Softball Tournament on Saturday, April 21, 2012 at Capitol Hill Softball Field.

RULES
- $50 Unlimited Homeruns
- $100 Entrance Fee
- 1 hour limit
- 10 run rule
- Minimum of 2 females on the field and line up
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- Maximum of 12 players

PRIZES
- 1st Prize: 1 case ribs, 1 case chicken, 1 case of drinks
- 2nd Prize: 1 case ribs, 1 case chicken
- 3rd prize: 1 case ribs, 2 cases of drinks

Deadline to register: April 18, 2012

Contact Information:
Shaun Butters – 483-1653
Tyler Collins – tyler.collins@cnmipss.org
Pedro Tudela – 989-0274

US govt moves to dismiss criminal complaint vs Miah

The U.S. government filed yesterday a motion to dismiss a criminal complaint filed against Mohammad Jahangir Miah, the man tagged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation as the mastermind in a scheme of cashing fraudulent CNMI tax refund checks at grocery stores.

Assistant U.S. attorney Stephen F. Leon Guerrero asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to dismiss the complaint as Miah was already indicted Tuesday on similar charges.

Miah has pleaded not guilty to the charges. His jury trial will start on May 22, 2012 at 9am.

FBI agents arrested Miah on March 19. At that time, he was on home confinement after being convicted of involvement in a driver's license scam at the Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

FBI agents arrested Miah after the U.S. government filed a criminal complaint charging him with conspiracy to commit bank fraud.

FBI special agent Haejun Park stated in an affidavit that their investigation began after a "confidential source" voluntarily came forward to report that he/she had been cashing fraudulent CNMI tax refund checks at Miah's direction.

It was not clear yet whether the "confidential source" will also be charged.

On Aug. 19, 2011, Miah, one of the five suspects in a driver's license scam at DPS, pleaded guilty in federal court to one count of conspiring to unlawfully produce and transfer identification documents. He was then placed on home confinement pending his sentencing. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

AIRPORT

From Page 1

1998 to 2006.

Delivering his message during the dedication ceremony was Manglona's son, Theodore, who expressed his father's sincere appreciation to the people of Rota and the CNMI for the rare privilege of serving them during his long years as a public servant. In his message, Manglona said he is forever grateful to all who recognized the importance of his contributions by renaming the island's airport in his honor.

A special recognition was also given to Manglona's departed wife, Magdalena, for her unconditional love and support.

The occasion was also attended by Commonwealth Ports Authority officials headed by executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero. Also in attendance were members of the island's municipal council, residents, and students.

A friend of the honoree, Eusebio Hocog, also delivered an acclamation of Manglona's political journey.

STANDOFF

From Page 1

Del Rosario said that China's ambassador presented her own proposal to end the standoff, which began early this week when Chinese ships prevented the Philippine navy from detaining Chinese fishermen who were allegedly caught poaching.

Both sides claim the uninhabited, horseshoe-shaped shoal, which lies about 200 kilometers (120 miles) from Zambales province, the nearest Philippine coast.

The 4-day-old standoff has reignited concern for potential conflict in the South China Sea, one of the world's busiest lanes that is also home to a myriad of competing territorial claims, most notably the Spratly Islands south of the shoal.

The disputes have settled into an uneasy standoff since the last major clash, which involved China and Vietnam and killed more than 70 Vietnamese sailors in 1988.

The barren islands, reefs and coral outcrops are claimed by China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan. They are rich fishing grounds and are believed to contain oil and gas reserves.

Apart from the Philippines, Vietnam has recently figured in territorial spats with China, while the U.S. has angered Beijing when it declared it was in its national interest to ensure the area remained stable.

FITIAL

From Page 1

said yesterday.

He said these are "federal dollars that can be circulating in the CNMI."

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) reiterated his request to the governor to restore the 80-hour work biweekly for federally funded employees, saying that several, if not all federally funded programs "require that payroll funds be used for that purpose or we lose it."

Tenorio said the funds for the following fiscal year will also be reduced by the amount that was not used the previous year.

"We are losing revenues from the lost income. Governor, there is no justification to continue this policy. Why should all government employees suffer just because we don't have the local funds to pay everybody 40 hours a week?" Tenorio, a former governor and speaker, told Fitial in a letter he sent Thursday.

Tenorio said if the government can help some of the workers, "why not?"

"It is just not fair, governor. Although it's only one day a week off, the net effect is really over 25 percent reduction in pay when you factor in the unpaid holidays. Many employees are now taking home only $400 every two weeks. How can a family of four survive on this salary?" he asked.

Tenorio, however, made a disclosure that his wife is employed by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and is paid with federal funds.

He asked the governor how much is needed to pay everybody 40 hours a week "and let us find it."

Fitial, in his fiscal year 2013 budget submission to the Legislature on March 30, said the government needs almost $7 million to lift the austerity measures in the coming fiscal year.

Tenorio has been pushing for casino gaming legalization on Saipan to help generate new revenue.

"Let me remind you, governor, that we tried in the House of Representatives to provide funding for this purpose in the casino bill that was defeated. But in the meantime, if we can't do anything about this matter promptly, the incumbent legislators have no business running for re-election this year," Tenorio told Fitial.

'It's about morale, not funding'

House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan), for his part, said the administration's position on the issue is about morale and not about funding.

"They believe that keeping morale high in the workplace will bring more productivity over longer work hours for a select few. They want to run an efficient and productive workplace," he said.

Camacho also said some federal grants can be redirected toward operations if requested early "so that such funds can be thoroughly exhausted."

U.S. Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta also requested Fitial to exempt Office of Insular Affairs-funded programs in January, to no avail.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) also earlier asked Fitial to exempt the Women, Infants and Children Program, to comply with federal law that says the WIC Program may not be subject to state budget restrictions.

Fitial exempted for 60 days since February the Nutrition Assistance Program from the austerity Fridays, to catch up on a backlog of some 900 eligibility cases that need to be reviewed.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that "there has not been any further requests since then."

"The governor did approve their initial request to be exempted for 60 days for purposes of addressing their backlog and because it was determined that sufficient funds were available," he said.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos told reporters in late February that the Fitial administration was already reviewing whether the 80 hours could be restored for all federally funded programs and agencies.

Inos said at the time a final decision could be made within the next 30 days or so.

"This matter is still under advisement with the governor," Demapan said yesterday.

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) said it is "not right" that federally funded employees need to get 16-hour cuts.

"We need to follow the grant as written for. If it calls for 80 hours of work, then it's that," he said.

The $102 million budget for fiscal year 2012 was premised on 64-hour work biweekly for locally funded agencies. The 2013 budget also calls for a 64-hour work biweekly.

HERO

From Page 1

stan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The U.S. Marine Corps earlier said that Kaipat was 21. Family members and the U.S. Department of Defense said yesterday he's 22.

He was supposed to turn 23 on Oct. 8, his family said. He was born on Saipan in 1989.

"I couldn't accept it, I couldn't believe it," his 20-year-old brother Pedro Jr. told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday via phone from Delaware. "Just a couple of days before that, we were talking on the phone and everything was okay. He sounded happy. He said he was fine. He sounded a lot better than his previous call when he sounded tired. He was even joking on the phone when I last talked to him."

That last phone call he had with his older brother was on Saturday night, April 7, Tacoma, Washington time.

"He pushes me to do better. I will miss him so much. I still couldn't believe it," Pedro Jr. said.

'He loves everything about the Marines'

The fallen Marine's older sister Pearllita, in a separate phone interview, said that Kaipat always wanted to become a Marine.

"That's what he wanted, to become a Marine. He enjoyed everything about it. He said he's going to stay with the Marines. He's our hero," Pearllita said, herself proud of what her brother has done in the fight against terror.

She said her brother was "very humble. He loves music. He loves to laugh and make others laugh. He likes hanging around the house or going to the park. He loves sushi and chicken *kelaguen*."

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) also described Kaipat as a "hero" who "gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation."

Kaipat's death brings to 16 the number of CNMI sons and daughters who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the wars against terror since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Kaipat "died as a result of multiple injuries received as a member of a dismounted patrol that was struck by an IED [improvised explosive device] while conducting combat operations in the Helmand Province," the U.S. Marine Corps said.

The Department of Defense also announced yesterday Kaipat's death on April 11 "while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan."

Kaipat was assigned to 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force out of Camp Pendleton, California.

Pearllita said her brother would call them in Tacoma from Afghanistan whenever he had the chance.

"The last time we talked to him, he asked how we were and he told us how he was. He said he's doing okay," she said.

Pearllita said her brother wanted to visit Saipan once he gets back from his deployment.

"That should have been in June or July," she said, adding that her brother knows by heart Carolinian, Chamorro, and English languages.

'Early Wednesday morning'

The Kaipat family, now living in Tacoma, was roused from their sleep shortly before 5am on April 11 when there were knocks on their door.

Pearllita said her cousin Courtney Taisakan was the one who opened the door.

"When my mom saw Marines standing in our doorway, she knew something was wrong. It was my dad who invited them [Marines] in," she said. "I was also shocked, hurt, and felt sad."

The fallen Marine's father Pedro Sr., 56, mother Sinforosa, younger brother Pedro Jr., and older sister Pearllita, 25, traveled from Washington State to Delaware to await the remains' arrival.

"The last information we have is that the body will arrive here at Dover Air Force Base at 4:30pm Friday (Saturday, Saipan time)," Pearllita said.

Pedro Jr. said his brother will be buried in Tacoma, Washington.

"The casket comes in tomorrow (Friday, Delaware time). We won't be able to see the body until they did all the examination and processing of documents. Four to seven days after that, we will be able to get hold of the body," he said. The family has yet to decide when the funeral will be.

Pearllita said they left Saipan in 2004 for Tacoma, Washington. An aunt on Saipan earlier said it was in 2005 when Kaipat and the family left.

Kaipat was also fond of art. His sister said he would have sketches of great white sharks and others that remind him of the islands.

Kaipat attended Oleai Elementary School, Hopwood Junior High School, and Marianas High School on Saipan. He finished high school at Mount Tahoma High School in Washington State in 2007. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 2008.

"He was 19 when he joined the Marines. His first deployment to Afghanistan was from December 2009 to July 2010. His second deployment in Afghanistan started in October 2011. That's the last time I saw my brother," Pearllita said.

She said her parents want "peace and love" for the whole family in the wake of her brother's passing.

Maria Taisakan, one of the fallen Marine's aunts on Saipan, told *Saipan Tribune* on Thursday that when they heard the news around 11:30pm on Wednesday, she didn't know what to say or do, considering that they were also about to bury her aunt the following day.

"I just wish I was there with my sister during this time," said Taisakan, 42, the youngest sister of the late Marine's mother.

She and their relatives on Saipan buried her aunt, Catalina I. Kapileo, a sister of her father.

Taisakan said her nephew was "very helpful and caring," and always had a smile.

The fallen Marine's relatives on Saipan are now holding rosaries for him and their other relative.

Besides Kaipat, the 15 other men and women from the CNMI who lost their lives while serving in the wars against terror include: Army Sgt. Yihgyh "Eddie" L. Chen (April 4, 2004), Army SSgt. Wilgene Lieto (Oct. 31, 2005), Army Spc. Derence W. Jack (Oct. 31, 2005), Army Sgt. Jesse J. Castro (Dec. 6, 2006), Marine LCpl Adam Q. Emul (Jan. 29, 2007), Army SPC Leeroy A. Camacho (Feb. 9, 2007), Army PFC John D. Flores (May 3, 2007), Army PFC Victor M. Fontanilla (May 17, 2007), Army Spc. Joe Junior G. Charfauros (June 20, 2007), Navy Seaman Anamarie San Nicolas Camacho (Oct. 22, 2007), Army Sgt. Brian S. Leon Guerrero (July 10, 2008), Army SSgt. Julian F. Manglona (Oct. 9, 2008), and Air Force SrA Audra P.M. Winkfield (June 19, 2009), Marine Cpl. Dave Michael Maliksi Santos (2010), and Sgt. George Joseph Affatica Sablan (Feb. 10, 2012).

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy birthday to Freddy "Unko Fred" Salavaria, who is celebrating his birthday today, April 14, 2012. Greetings come from your Teen Talk and Hilitai familia. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fitial: Manglona, Santos more desperate than ever

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial expressed grave disappointment yesterday regarding Senate President Paul Manglona's (Ind-Rota) latest attempt to use false allegations in order to save whatever chance is left for his re-election. This comes after Manglona engineered a family feud of sort by manipulating Felix Santos to run against his first cousin, incumbent Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota).

"Felix is the 10th person approached by Manglona because the first nine individuals have completely lost faith in the Senate president," said Fitial. "Now that he realized that much of his political traction is lost, he has resorted to unfounded political attacks against the good congresswoman of Rota."

The governor cited the separation of powers doctrine in refuting claims that Rep. Santos was connected to his recent budget submission to the Legislature.

"Have Paul and Felix lost touch with reality? No legislator participates in the governor's budget submission process because lawmakers know that when I submit the budget to them, it then becomes their job to come up with an appropriations measure," noted Fitial. "Over 20 years in the Legislature and Manglona still doesn't understand the process?"

Fitial also took exception to Manglona and Felix Santos' attempt to link Rep. Santos to his decision to veto the Rota local bill this week.

"Obviously, neither Paul nor Felix did any fact checks before they spoke. I made it very clear that I have no qualms with making sure dialysis patients are taken cared of. However, I was forced veto the bill because of the inclusion of a dangerous provision that would create another layer of bureaucracy," stated Fitial. "This provision aimed at politically picking which patients get funding is yet another concoction by the subsistence allowance expert. It is a pure shame that even for the well being of dialysis patients, Sen. Paul and his cohorts still look for ways to ensure that they can reap political benefits."

Fitial

Manglona

Fitial noted that Rep. Santos has successfully pushed for passage of local bills that gave funding to dialysis patients.

"So why do they want to come up with a new board now? The timing and purpose is extremely suspicious," added Fitial. "It's a travesty that Sen. Paul would even consider politicizing dialysis patients just because he's up for re-election." ***(Office of the Governor)***

TEEN TALK CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Teen Talk, a volunteer youth/peer education group from the CNMI Public School System's Youth Development Program, films a talk show for their upcoming premier with special guest John Dax Moreno, Communicable Disease Manager from the Commonwealth Health Corporation's Division of Public Health. Teen Talk would like to thank Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan, Associate Commissioner of Instructional Services Jackie Quitugua, Science/Health/HIV Program coordinator Vina Saures, BOE chair Marylou Ada and members, Commonwealth Health Corporation Division of Public Health director Roxanne Diaz, PSS Teen Talk advisers Freddy Salavaria, Monica Pangelinan, and Sharleen Crisostimo, parents/guardians, and school principals for all their support. Special thanks to John Dax Moreno for being the first guest on the show.

'Trashion' at Saipan Grand Hotel today

To support the Division of Environmental Quality and Mariana Islands Nature Alliance's advocacy of creating community awareness of "Recycle, Re-Use, and Reduce (The 3Rs)," the Saipan Grand Hotel will host a fashion show today, April 14, 2012, at 6:30pm at its lobby.

Aptly called "Trashion," the event has an added twist of models putting on wearable pieces from an amazing array of non-clothing recycled items that would otherwise find their way to the dump. This is where art, creativity, imagination, and sustainability meet in honor of Earth Day and Environmental Month.

An annual tradition spearheaded by DEQ and participated in by designers and modeled by high school students, the event has generated community involvement as well. From the materials to be used to the skillfulness of the designs, all chipped in to create wearable works of art. The show is open to the public.

This also coincides with the hotel's weekly food fair. ***(PR)***

CULTURAL CENTER ACTIVITIES

The Tinian Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Center is happy to announce that there are free lessons to Chamorros and Carolinians on making *atmadyas, charakilis*, and *Ahu* this Saturday at the Tinian Senior Citizen Center Pavilion. The lessons will start at 8:30am. Bring your children so that they, too, can learn the traditional ways of the Chamorros and Carolinians.

These lessons are offered by the Association of Native Medicine and Culture, in partnership with the Tinian Community and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Mayor, and funded in part by the Administration for Native Americans. For more information, call 433-9220 and ask for Raymond Sablan. ***(PR)***

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Amendment # 01

Amendment of the Commonwealth's Consolidated Plan for Program Year 2010-2014 and the Commonwealth's Program Year 2011 Annual Action Plan
(This advertisement is paid for with CDBG funds provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.)

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the amendment of the Commonwealth's Consolidated Plan for Program Year 2010-2014 and the Commonwealth's Program Year 2011 Annual Action Plan. The amendment provides the inclusion of the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) which will be made available to the Commonwealth by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Intended use of the ESG grant is described as follows:

Activity Description	Activity Type	Anticipated Funding Amount
ESG: FY 2011 Emergency Solutions Grant (Second Allocation	The proposed use of these funds will be for the Rapid Re-Housing component of the program. Funds will be available for short-term and medium-term financial assistance for individuals and families who are literally homeless and for administrative costs.	The second allocation, in the amount of $22,861, will be used for Rapid Re-Housing activities and administrative costs.
FY 2012 Allocation	The proposed use of these funds will be for the administration of the Homelessness Management Informations System (HMIS), administrative costs, and homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing activities.	The total anticipated amount for the next cycle's funding will be in the amount of $68,179, of which 40% or more will be used for Rapid Re-Housing activities and the balance of the funds will be used for the following activities: HMIS administration, homelessness prevention activities, and administrative costs.

Future funding allocations will be announced through a public notice once the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation receives the allocation amounts from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Public hearings will also be held at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation on the island of Saipan on:

April 25, 2012, 6 p.m., NMHC Main Office, Rota
April 26, 2012, 6 p.m., NMHC Main Office, Tinian
April 27, 2012, 6 p.m., NMHC Conference room, NMHC Main Office, Saipan

The general public, along with governmental agencies and non-profit organizations, are invited to comment on the substantial amendment during the public hearings.

The Amended Plan is also available for public review and inspection at NMHC's Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Tinian and Rota during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays. For all inquiries, contact Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Planner/Grant Writer, at 670-234-6866 or 7689. Written comments must be received by NMHC on May 9, 2012, no later than 4:30 p.m., at our designated NMHC branches.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Notice of Meeting

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE
BOARD OF REGENTS' REGULAR MEETING

Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Time: 9:30 a.m.

Place: Northern Marianas College
BOR Conference Room
Saipan Campus

AGENDA

I. Call Meeting to Order
- a. Roll Call
- b. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- c. Review and Adoption of Minutes
  1. February 14, 2012 – Regular Meeting
  2. March 14, 2012 – Regular Meeting

II. Public Comment Period: Individuals may orally testify on items on this agenda during the Public Comment Period. Written testimony is also accepted. Testifiers are requested to limit their testimony to five (5) minutes.

III. Board Chair's Remarks

IV. Reports
- a. Associated Students of NMC
- b. Staff Senate
- c. Faculty Senate
- d. President's Report
  1. Dean of Administration Report
- e. Peer Analysis
- f. Program Highlights – CREES

V. Old Business
- a. WASC Matters
  1. WASC Accreditation Update (No action required)

VI. New Business
- a. Board Policy for Consideration – First Reading
  1. Board Policy No. 203 – President Recruitment and Hiring (Action Item)
  2. Board Policy No. 203.1 – President's Authority and Responsibilities (Action Item)
  3. Board Policy No. 206 – Policy Introduction, Amendment, Passage, and Suspension (Action Item)
  4. Board Policy No. 301.1 – Academic Freedom (Action Item)
  5. Board Policy No. 301.2 – Political Activities (Action Item)
  6. Board Policy No. 309.1 – Honorary Degrees (Action Item)
- b. Board Policy for Consideration – Second Reading
  1. Board Policy No. 200.1 – Institutional Governance (Action Item)
- c. Tuition and Fees - Phase One Report (No Action Required)

VII. Legislative Update
- a. Constitutional Amendment to increase minimal funding
- b. Pending Bills

VIII. Executive Session
(At any time during the scheduled meeting of the Board of Regents may be required to enter into executive session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential)

IX. Upcoming Board Activities
1. Charter Day - May 04, 2012, NMC Grounds
2. Graduation Day - May 19, 2012, MHS Gymnasium
3. Schedule Next Regular meeting

X. Board Self-Evaluation

XI. Adjournment

/s/ Juan T. Lizama
BOR Chairperson

Date: April 12, 2012

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER
The Associated Press
Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Ebooks price fixing? Book 'em

The following editorial appeared in the Los Angeles Times *on Wednesday, April 11:*

When word leaked that the Justice Department was threatening to sue Apple and five major book publishers for allegedly fixing the price of ebooks, the opposition from some tech advocates was swift and sharp. The feds were looking at the wrong problem, these critics said. The new pricing model adopted by Apple and the publishers promoted competition in the markets for ebooks, ebook readers and hardcopy books that Amazon had come to dominate. Attacking that model might lower the price for some ebooks, but it would hurt the rest of the book industry and give Amazon an inside track to a publishing monopoly.

That's an interesting argument, but it's irrelevant. The Supreme Court ruled long ago that companies can't fix prices just because they're worried they can't survive otherwise. If the Justice Department has evidence that Apple and the five publishers—Macmillan, Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, Hachette and Pearson—colluded on a plan to raise the price of ebooks, it's right to seek a remedy.

At issue is the publishers' decision to stop selling ebooks wholesale to the likes of Amazon and Barnes & Noble and to shift to the "agency" approach proposed by Apple. Under the original system, publishers sold ebooks to retailers at about half the cover price and let the retailers determine what to charge consumers for them. Amazon had been selling popular new ebooks at a loss—and, to the publishers' chagrin, at a far lower price than hardback editions—to promote sales of its Kindle reader. The agency model, by contrast, requires retailers to charge the price set by the publisher, while allowing them to keep 30 percent of the sales revenue.

Apple's contracts with the publishers also include a "most favored nation" clause requiring them to set ebook prices at rival retailers no lower than they are at Apple's iTunes store. With five of the six largest publishers agreeing to that provision, Apple's rivals faced a Hobson's choice: either adopt the agency model too, or pay a wholesale price for books equal to what Apple was charging the public for them.

Amazon still has the lion's share of the ebook market, but new outlets are gaining traction. Meanwhile, the Kindle is no longer the presumptive king of the ebook readers, thanks to Apple's popular iPad and Barnes & Noble's Nook. These changes are good for consumers, which leads critics of the Justice Department to ask why it's scrutinizing the contracts that caused them. But if these changes happened because key players colluded to impose the terms that suit them best, there's less competition and benefit for consumers than there would be otherwise. That's just the sort of thing the Justice Department should be investigating.

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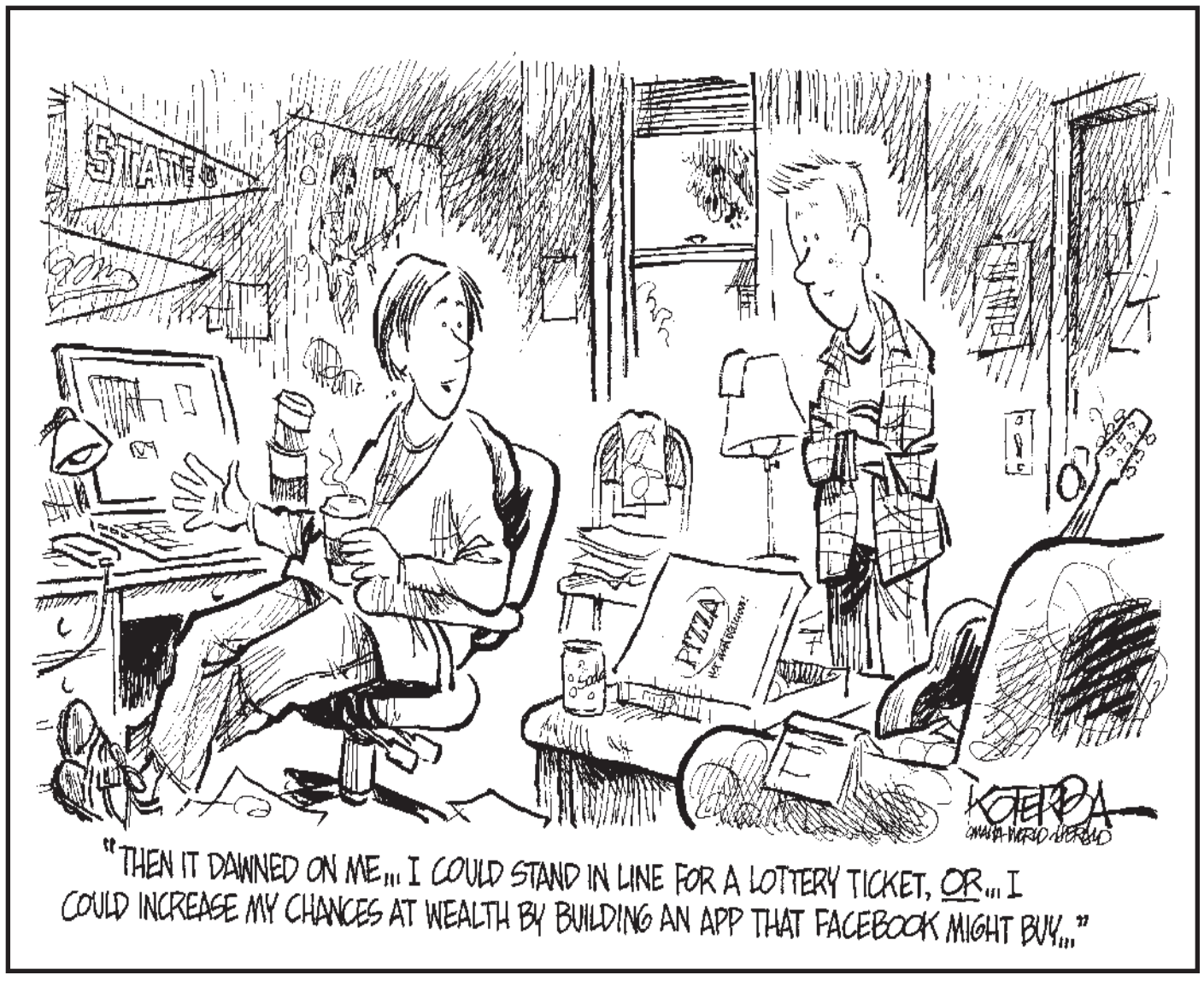
STATE
PIZZA
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KOTERBA
"THEN IT DAWNED ON ME... I COULD STAND IN LINE FOR A LOTTERY TICKET, OR... I COULD INCREASE MY CHANCES AT WEALTH BY BUILDING AN APP THAT FACEBOOK MIGHT BUY..."

Exposing Watergate might be harder today

By EDWARD WASSERMAN
The Miami Herald

Edward Wasserman is Knight professor of journalism ethics at Washington and Lee University. He wrote this column for The Miami Herald.

The shadow of Watergate falls only lightly across the U.S. political landscape. Instead, the epic scandal is discernible mainly in the absence of the evils that engendered it. Even during the panicky post-9/11 era, when the temptation to ignore the law at times overwhelmed good judgment, never were even the most zealous of Bush-Cheney toadies accused of using the machinery of state to punish partisan adversaries.

No, that was a uniquely Nixonian response to political challenge: Shadowy operatives with national security credentials tapped phones of columnists; dissidents were burgled and bullied; critics had their taxes audited; black bag operations were authorized at cabinet level and above.

That was Watergate, and since it cost Richard Nixon his presidency it seems now to have been banished from the political sphere, an absence that is rarely noticed. So Watergate touches the political culture only faintly.

But for journalists it's quite a different matter: Watergate remains the defining event of the past half-century. It was a towering moment of heroism, an episode of legendary stature in which journalism's foundational purposes were triumphantly validated and a drift toward despotism was stopped, all thanks to a single-minded dedication to the craft of determined reporting.

And it has been a powerful inspiration for the two generations of journalists that came since. "We're all the sons and daughters of Watergate," as Jeff Leen, investigations editor of The Washington Post, told a gathering at the American Society of News Editors annual conference in Washington last week.

Leen's comment came during a remarkable panel marking the 40th anniversary of the Watergate break-in, when burglars hired by the Nixon re-election campaign were busted while trying to plant listening devices at Democratic Party headquarters. (The anniversary isn't until June, but nobody seemed to care.)

The ASNE panel included both reporting stars of The Post's historic investigation, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein. No less important, in the front row of the audience were their then-editor, Ben Bradlee, now 90, and Donald Graham, CEO of the Post organization, whose late mother Katherine, then publisher, stood firm before the fierce counterattack of the Nixon cabal.

The panel's ostensible topic was how the media would handle that affair today, in a radically different informational world. Now, with cascading opportunities for news to come to light and for informants to go public at dizzying speed, and with a burgeoning corps of amateur and semi-pro sleuths and commentators, wouldn't the secrets of the vast conspiracy have surfaced months sooner, with no need for two reporters to place calls, ring doorbells and trudge along with notebooks and questions?

Surely nowadays an election-season break-in at opposition headquarters would trigger an informational avalanche, and the mystery would unravel in days, rather than the nearly two years of courthouse and congressional hearings that it took to eviscerate Nixon's administration and force him out.

But the panel was skeptical, and it was hard not to wonder whether, paradoxically, exposing a conspiracy of that scope might actually be harder now. For one thing, Bernstein suggested, he and Woodward were writing for an audience that was interested in facts. Today's readers are looking more single-mindedly to confirm what they believe. "I'm not sure the story could withstand that cultural reception," he said. "It'd get ground up."

For another, he and Woodward both spoke reverently about the steadfastness of the institution that sheltered them. Watergate, Bernstein said, "was about a newspaper." Faced with the possibility they might be compelled to turn over their records, Woodward recalled, Katherine Graham responded, "They're not their notes, they're my notes."

That kind of resoluteness is in short supply in an era when newsroom staffs have shrunk and public mission is a line item on a quarterly marketing plan.

And there's yet another reason to wonder how readily Watergate would be exposed today. That's the capacity of authorities to identify and move against sources.

The warm reception President Obama received from the editors conference a few hours before the Watergate panel was ironic in view of the unprecedented six Espionage Act prosecutions his Justice Department has mounted against people who leaked information to the press—information that while institutionally embarrassing, was miles from constituting any detectable security threat.

Nowadays, those sources are being ferreted out and shut down with 21st-century techniques of surveillance and digital information retrieval. It's good that Nixon's henchmen didn't have those tools to roll up the network of sources so patiently cultivated by Woodward and Bernstein.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Tips for the fearful flier

By LAURA BLUMENFELD
Los Angeles Times

Laura Blumenfeld, author of Revenge: A Story of Hope, *is writing a book about World War II. She wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times.

The midair meltdown of a JetBlue pilot last month confirms what I try to deny while flying: Hurtling 30,000 feet above the Earth in an aluminum tube is indubitably nutty. JetBlue passengers tackled the pilot on the New York-Las Vegas flight, the airline said, when he stormed the cabin, rambling, due to a "medical situation."

While I sympathize with the captain's medical situation, I wonder if he was acting out what the rest of us are thinking when we're on a plane: I want off.

I tried recently to become a fearless flier. At a Washington dinner, I had met Robert Benzon, a Vietnam War combat pilot and, at the time, one of America's top air crash investigators. The National Transportation Safety Board director referred to him as "The Rock." Benzon has sifted through more than 30 major air wrecks, including the 1988 Pan Am Lockerbie bombing, the 9/11 jets and the US Airways ditching in the Hudson River.

And yet, Benzon says, you could fly every day for 11,000 years before you'd board a doomed airplane. "I'm more aware when I fly," Benzon told me. "But I'm not apprehensive at all."

I asked the veteran investigator if I could observe him at work. He was about to retire, and before he did, I wanted to learn his secret and make it my own. I arrived at Benzon's office, which overlooks Reagan National Airport. All morning he'd been analyzing past NTSB events—cockpit fires, torque tube failures, wingtip strikes. At lunch, he chewed on a sandwich while listening to the scanner from Reagan's control tower. When storms blow through, he told me, the voices in the tower rise an octave. The voices in the cockpit rise too.

The more time I spent with Benzon, the more confident I grew that he might have the cure. In my family, we battle travel anxiety by clinging to stuffed animals. The night before a flight, we lay a trail of Post-its to the door to remind us to pack Dolphie, my 8-year-old daughter's totemic, stuffed dolphin. Last Christmas break, when I accidentally set the alarm for 5 p.m. instead of 5 a.m., we woke to the taxi driver banging on our door and stampeded into the icy dark, panicked that we would miss our plane. A block down the road, my daughter gasped when she realized what she'd forgotten.

"Keep driving," my husband told the taxi driver. "Not without Dolphie!" My daughter cried, "Dolphie! Dolphie!" The driver, who spoke little English, cut his eyes to me: "Who Dolphie?"

I was hoping that Benzon would carry us beyond Dolphie. His job was to pinpoint causes of accidents, then recommend steps to prevent them. Some were common sense, like buckling up. "I never take off my seat belt," Benzon told me. "If I could leave it on and go to the bathroom, I would."

Other discoveries are technical. Benzon picked up a half-inch metal disc from his desk: "A 3-cent washer could destroy a whole plane." A mechanic had dropped the disc while repairing a China Air Boeing 737. Later, when the plane landed in Japan, a bolt came loose and the engine caught fire. Passengers had to jump down inflatable slides. The airplane exploded. Benzon found a similar problem on 21 aircraft worldwide.

In one NTSB lab we visited lay a recorder recovered in Katmandu, Nepal, a crushed orange box caked in mud. They would play the pilots' dying words hundreds of times.

In all, Benzon had investigated the end of 3,000 lives. The smell of burning jet fuel, hydraulic fluid and human skin mixing and rising in an orange-black ball had, at times, made him want to quit. One of the most painful scenes he heard on a recorder was in Denver: "A couple on board, upside down in a muddy field. They were crunched together, and they were talking about their kids, as she was slowly slipping away."

Talk of dying mothers reminded me of my own air anxiety. In the taxi to the airport last Christmas, I overruled my husband and we went back for the ragged Dolphie. We just made our flight to San Juan, Puerto Rico, where we were met by a magnitude 5.4 earthquake.

Now I wanted to become an intrepid traveler, like Benzon. So I asked the investigator the essential question, the real reason I had contrived to tour the NTSB. What did Benzon do to feel safe a mile high? He always carried the NTSB's crash-scene checklist. But what else?

"A little stuffed animal," Benzon said, stifling a chuckle. "One of those Beanie Baby squirrels."

Nuts, the squirrel. Nuts flew with Benzon to Kabul, Afghanistan, to reconstruct an aircraft that struck a mountain, to Greece to sleuth the mystery of a failed pressurization system, to China to inspect wreckage in a rice paddy. His wife had given him the plush toy. "She said don't lose this or you're going to be in trouble overseas." The squirrel travels in Benzon's checked bags, never in carry-on.

"I'm afraid," Benzon said, "I'd lose him."

Religion gets a pass; not reason

By LANE FILLER
Newsday

Lane Filler is a member of the Newsday *editorial board.*

Lately I've been wishing I were Amish, and not just because I look so dashing in a horse-drawn buggy. It's because their beliefs allow the Amish, and other religious people and institutions, to hold on to liberties the federal government has wrestled from the rest of us.

The recent debate over Obamacare and the exemptions from providing contraceptive coverage for religious organizations actually highlighted a much larger chasm in our society. Actions we undertake based on unprovable religious faiths are legally protected. Try to make the exact same move based on reason and you'll end up paying an extremely large fine, or inhabiting an extremely small cell.

Religiously oriented organizations, Catholic ones in particular, won't have to directly provide employees with contraception. But a nonreligious employer, a Chuck E. Cheese franchisee, let's say, can make very logical arguments for opposing contraception, and not wanting to offer it to employees: "Contraception is destroying Medicare and Social Security stability," he might say. "No one's having enough kids to fund the programs thanks to it. And I'm not going to add to the low birthrate that's destroying my business, because 99 percent of my sales are whiny-child driven. Also, the other 1 percent, adults who come in without kids, really creep me out."

You may think this fellow is wrong, but his reasons for not wanting to follow the law make good sense. Yet since his reasons are not religious, he has no rights.

The Amish provide an even better example. Self-employed Amish folks are excused from contributing to Social Security or Medicare, thanks to Section 1402(g)(1) of the Internal Revenue code, because their religion says any form of insurance shows a lack of faith that God will care for them, and because they have a social structure that provides help in times of need. In order to get the exemption, they agree not to derive benefit from the programs. They will be exempt from Obamacare, as well.

But let's say I'm a self-employed writer (let's not say it too loudly around my boss, but let's say it) and I want to be exempted from Social Security. Ponying up 12.4 percent of my earnings in exchange for an iffy promise that I'll get a couple grand each month when I turn 67—if the money doesn't run out and if the rules don't change—is an investment on par with an exchange-traded fund focused on slide-rule, buggy whip and record player manufacturers. The best-case scenario is a bad return. The worst-case scenario is the "Apocalypse Now," of balance sheets.

You can make an equally sensible argument against buying health insurance. When you purchase it, only part of your money goes to health care. The rest pays people to man phones in Dubuque or New Delhi and tell you you've been denied your procedure, to the $36 million salary of the Great White Shark of a CEO and to stockholder profits. Why would anyone pony up for all that?

I'd rather just pay the part that goes to my health, by giving providers money directly.

I don't want the sick dying for lack of care, or the impoverished elderly starving. And I'm willing to pay direct income taxes to prevent it. That's far different from telling me I must fund my own retirement and health care through such plans.

Such programs don't just steal the freedoms of the religious. In fact, it's only the devout who can exercise these freedoms.

Those who want to follow the same paths, motivated by reason, haven't a prayer.

Why taxes are top of mind with Democrats

By CARL P. LEUBSDORF
The Dallas Morning News

Carl P. Leubsdorf is the former Washington bureau chief of the Dallas Morning News. *Readers may write to him via email at: carl.p.leubsdorf@gmail.com.*

As Americans scramble to file their tax returns before Tuesday's deadline, President Barack Obama and his allies are pressing a multilevel campaign to bolster what seems to be an unusual Democratic advantage on a traditional Republican strong point—taxes.

Significantly, the sharp divide between Obama and likely Republican rival Mitt Romney on tax policy is more than an academic exercise because the election will almost surely determine the future of the Bush tax cuts and perhaps overall tax policy.

The 2001 tax cuts for all taxpayers expire at the end of 2012, and a re-elected Obama would probably be in a position to fulfill his pledge to block any continuation of the reductions for families making over $250,000 a year. A Romney victory would bolster GOP determination to make the reductions permanent for all.

This week's specific Democratic target is the Obama proposal named after billionaire investor Warren Buffett, which would require a 30 percent tax rate on all taxpayers with incomes of more than $1 million.

Though it's more symbolic than substantive, it underscores the difference between greater taxation equality and Romney's support for across-the-board tax cuts that give the biggest reductions to the wealthy. It serves to jab the likely GOP nominee for failing to make public more than two years of his own taxes.

On Monday, Obama re-election campaign chief Jim Messina and two top White House economists pushed the measure, scheduled for a Senate vote next Monday, in conference calls with reporters. Romney is "the beneficiary of a broken tax system, and he wants to keep it that way," Messina said.

On Tuesday, Obama made the Buffett rule the centerpiece of an appearance in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and on Wednesday, he reiterated his argument at the White House, noting, "One in four millionaires pays a lower tax rate than millions of middle-class households."

On Thursday, Vice President Joe Biden will press the point in New Hampshire, like Florida a swing state where taxes have often been a key issue.

Republicans note that, for all the administration posturing, the Buffett tax would only raise $47 billion over 10 years, a figure conceded by the White House.

Tuesday on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, chairman of the House Budget Committee, derided it as "budget pixie dust" that Democrats think will magically solve the nation's fiscal problems. In reality, he said, "It represents a huge tax increase on job creators" like small business owners who file as individuals rather than businesses.

Meanwhile, Wednesday's daily NBC News First Read blog and several other news organizations questioned the issue's political clout, citing a poll of independents in which a phrase representing Obama's position fared less well than one portraying Romney's stance.

A new ABC News-Washington Post poll showed that, while Romney has a slight advantage over Obama on the economy in general, Obama led narrowly on handling taxes and by double digits on "protecting the middle class."

In addition, those polled said by a 15-point margin that "unfairness in the economic system that favors the wealthy" was a bigger problem than "over-regulation of the free market that interferes with growth and prosperity."

Until 2008, when Republican nominee John McCain bore the brunt of voter concern over a sagging economy, Republicans traditionally held an advantage on taxes because of their consistent support for lowering them.

The Democrats have erased that margin. They benefit from the fact that polls consistently show the public favors increased taxes on the wealthy and that economists say the Bush cuts had only a modest impact on creating jobs.

Besides, the fact that Romney paid well under the average rate for most Americans helps them press that point. So it's hardly surprising it's the Democrats who are marking the week before tax payments by taking the initiative on tax issues.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°

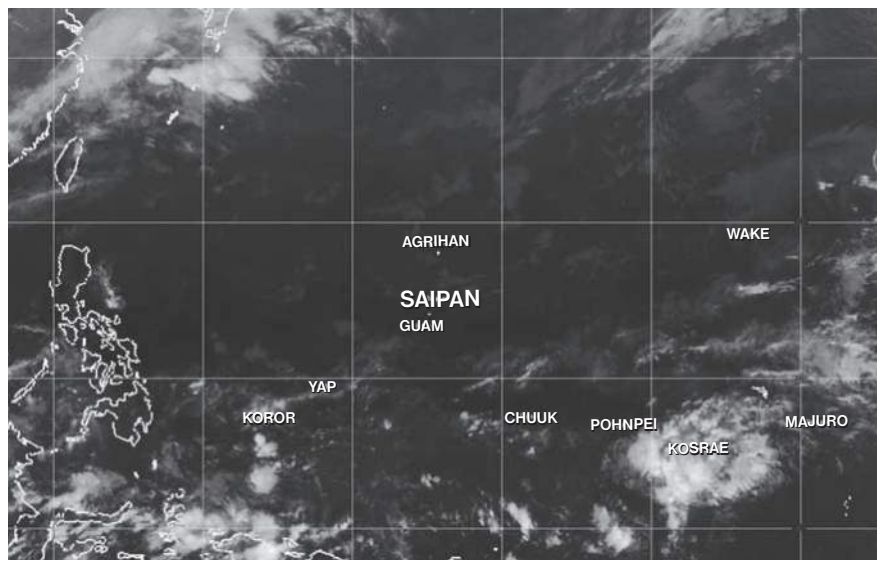
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲87	▼78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲89	▼78
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲92	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼78
Kosrae	Showers	▲85	▼78
Majuro	Showers	▲89	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲67	▼60
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲78	▼48
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲77	▼73
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲81	▼71
London	Showers	▲55	▼41
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲63	▼49
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲93	▼77
Melbourne	Sunny	▲80	▼55
Miami	Showers	▲80	▼70
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲71	▼57
Osaka	Cloudy	▲66	▼46
Paris	Showers	▲58	▼41
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲63	▼52
Rome	Showers	▲64	▼51
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲62	▼41
San Francisco	Sunny	▲60	▼49
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲66	▼41
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲64	▼48
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲75	▼61

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough stretches eastward from 4N130E through weak circulations centered southeast of Koror near 3N137E and southwest of Pohnpei near 3N157E to end at EQ172E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are occurring southwest of Koror between 7N and the equator from 130E to 136E farther east. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are located south of Chuuk and Pohnpei but over Kosrae within 130 miles of a line from 1N148E to 5N167E. A nearly stationary front runs southwestward from 25N180E to a circulation centered northeast of Wake Island near 21N170E then continues as a shear line to end near 13N157E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found east of Wake Island between 24N to 18N from 173E to 180. A surface trough extends southwestward from the circulation east of Wake Island to end near 8N165E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found within 90 miles of a line from 11N170E to 14N174E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:02 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
9:36 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
2:12 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
9:41 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:03 AM	6:31 PM
Sunday	6:03 AM	6:31 PM
Monday	6:02 AM	6:32 PM
Tuesday	6:02 AM	6:32 PM
Wednesday	6:01 AM	6:32 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:58 AM	12:45 PM
Sunday	1:43 AM	1:38 PM
Monday	2:25 AM	2:29 PM
Tuesday	3:05 AM	3:18 PM
Wednesday	3:43 AM	4:06 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

SCHEDULE OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am Chamorro, 9am English, 11am Filipino and 6pm English
Monday-Saturday: 6am Chamorro
Wednesday: 6pm Chamorro
Parish office hours:
Monday-Saturday
8am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-5pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm (PH Novena 5:45pm)
Friday: 5:30pm praying of Divine Mercy Chaplet; 6pm devotional mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
Saturday: 6am and 6pm (anticipated)
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am 6pm Tagalog mass
Parish office hours: (Fr. Celso G. Magbanua) Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 8-11:30am/ 3-5:30pm, Wednesday and Friday 3-5pm.
Telephone no. 285-0273

Santa Soledad Mission Parish
Monday: 6pm
Tuesday: 6pm
Wednesday: 6pm
Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm (Youth mass/ anticipated Sunday mass)
Sunday: 7am and 9am (Children's mass)
Parish office hours: Wednesday and Friday: 8-10am,
Saturday: 4-6pm
Telephone no. 256-4568

Saint Jude Parish
Monday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 7am
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Parish office hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-11:30am, 3:30-5pm
Office is close every Thursday and Saturday
Telephone no. 288-0007

San Antonio Parish
Monday-Friday 6pm
Saturday: 6pm
Sunday: 7am, 9am (Blessing of children)
Parish office hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 8-11:30am, 2-4:45pm
Close on Sunday and Monday

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am Chamorro, 8am English
Monday and Tuesday:6am Chamorro
Wednesday:6pm English
Thursday: 6am Chamorro
Friday: 6am English
Saturday: 6am Chamorro, 6pm Tagalog
Sunday: anticipated mass

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am, 8am, 10am
Monday-Friday: 7pm
Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Monday- Saturday: 6am daily mass
Monday- Sunday: 3pm Divine Mercy Chaplet
Wednesday: 6pm, mass, exposition of the blessed sacrament
Saturday: 6pm, anticipated Sunday mass
Sunday: 7:30-9am English, 6pm Tagalog mass
Office hours: Monday-Wednesday: 9am-12pm, 2-5pm
Thursday: day off
Friday- Saturday: 8am-12pm, 2-5pm
Telephone no. 234-6991

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 7:30am Chamorro, 9am English
Monday: 6pm English
Tuesday: 6pm English
Wednesday: 6pm English- novena mass to our Lady of San Roque oil
Thursday: 6pm English
Friday: 6pm English- Devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus (First Fridays)
Saturday: 6am English- Our Lady's Saturday mass for the intentions of the Men and Women in military service, 6pm English- anticipated mass
Parish office hours: daily except Thursday and Sundays: 4:30-6pm
Telephone no. 322-2404, Fr. Bong's cell: 285-912, Diocesan Finance office: 234-3000 ext.143

San Vicente Parish
Monday-Friday: 6pm,
Saturday: 6pm (First Saturday of every month)
Sunday: 6am anticipated mass, 6pm (Neo Catechumenal community mass), 8pm
Sunday: 6am, 9am, 6pm
Parish office hours: daily 9-11am
Telephone no. 235-8208 or 287-0131

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 8am
Monday: 6pm (1st Mondays cemetery masses at 5:30pm)
Tuesday- Friday: 6pm
Saturday: 6pm-anticipated Sunday mass 8-10pm
Parish office hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30am-12pm

PROTESTANT

Amen Church
Sunday : 10am, 1pm, 5pm Wednesday : 7pm Friday Prayer : 9pm Bible Study : 4pm (Tue) Music Practice : 5pm (Sat) Korean class: 3:30pm (Thu) Visitation : 10am(Fri, Sat) Outreach : 8am (First Sat)
Tel. No. 285-2121, 256-2221 Email : oseyo@daum.net

Born Again Christian
(Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm
Telephone no. 234-6026/27

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services:
Sunday: Chinese and Filipino 9am, English 6pm
Bible Study: Wednesday and Saturday 8pm
Telephone no. 235-8540

Church 360
Suite 103 of Marianas Business Plaza (1st floor of former Nauru Building).
Contact www.church360saipan.org, info@church360saipan.org, or call 888-2116
Celebration Service: Sundays at 10:15am
Prayer Fellowship: Thursdays at 6:30pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Morning Service, Sunday, 10:00 am
Evening Service, Sunday, 6:00 pm
Children Sunday School, 10:00am/ 6:00 pm
Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7-9 pm
Youth Night of Worship, Friday, 6:30 pm
As Perdido Road
Chalan Piao, Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No. (670) 235-8590
Email: cornerstone@cfemcares.org

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 10:00am
Place: Garapan, Plumeria Road,
Call 285-6081 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 9-11am
Sunday school/ Children's church 9am (nursery available during Sunday service)
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: 6am Tuesday GCA Kagman, Wednesday Navy Hill, Thursday San Antonio
Home Cell Bible Study: 7pm (Through out the week)
Telephone no. 322-5680

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (English)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (Tagalog)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church
Chalan Kanoa Drive, Chalan Kanoa (east of Town Center and Beach Road, Near Mt. Carmel Cathedral)
Worship Service: 9:00am
Children's Sunday School: 9:00am
Choir Practice: 8:00am
Singspiration: 8:30am
Prayer, Care & Share: Wednesday 7:00pm
Pastor: Millie Carroll 322-6158

Immanuel Methodist Church
(Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)
(Korean Congregation)
Sunday worship: 9am, 10:30, 1pm
Wednesday evening service: 8pm
Daily morning prayer: 5am

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
Sunday English Service: 7:30-9am,
Sunday Tagalog Service: 9-11am and 6-8pm,
Wednesday: 7:30-9pm

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9:20am
Sunday Adult: 11am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service: 10 am at Seventh Day Adventist church on Quartermaster Rd.
Wednesday Service: 7 pm at Fina Sisu Housing FS#1
Contact Nick for more info: 287-1661

Marianas Bible Fellowship Center
Sunday School: 9-9:30am
Divine Worship: 9:30-11am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ (4th Watch)
Sunday worship 8:30am
Sunday evening 7:00pm
Prayer meeting, every Wednesday 7:30pm San Jose village, after San Jose Hotel
Telephone: 789-7566

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 10-11am
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 6-7pm
Thursday Bible Study: 7pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church Koblerville
Sunday services:
Sunday school 9:00am
Morning worship 10:00am
Evening service 6:00pm
Wednesday evening bible study 7:00pm

Chinese services
Sunday morning 10:00am
Sunday evening 7:00pm

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church.
Telephone No: 285-4661/2

Thy Word Ministries Saipan
Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi

Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian
Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Victorious Christian Church
(Formerly God's Victorious Army)
Sunday 8:30am to 10:30am - Worship Service
Monday 7:00 pm - Women's Fellowship
Tuesday nights - Home cellgroup
Wednesday - 7:30pm to 9:00pm Mid Week Service
Friday 7:30pm to 9:00pm Prayer Meeting
Saturday nights - Praise and worship practice
Last Friday of the month - Overnight praying meeting
Pastor Brendon Perez - Tel# 2359246

Editor's Note: Information subject to change without prior notice. All information provided by the respective churches. If you want your church or religious activities included or to report changes and errors, call *Saipan Tribune* at 235-6397 or 235-2440 or email editor@saipantribune.com.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Apr. 14, 1999

Reyes expects budget to fall to $180M
The budget proposed by Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio for fiscal year 2000 may dip to $180 million, which could force the government to further cut down personnel costs, the chair of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee warned yesterday. In an interview with reporters, Rep. Karl T. Reyes said revenues anticipated to be collected next year by finance officials could likely fall below the $206 million as projected in the budget package submitted early this month to the Legislature. He maintained the administration has yet to fully estimate the decline in the collections from user fees paid out by garment manufacturers who have warned earlier of business slowdown in the next few months due to increasing global competition and the impact of the recent lawsuit.

Governor, chiefs to meet
Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio said yesterday he will attend the annual meeting of the Council of Micronesian Chief Executives scheduled for next week at the Marshall Islands. This will be the first time that Tenorio would join heads of states and island governors from the Micronesian region for the yearly gathering since he became governor two years ago. The three-day meeting, which begins April 22 on the northern Likiep atoll in the Marshalls, is expected to focus on transportation issues, tourism, marine life protection, and the Micronesian games to be held in 2002.

Apr. 14, 2000

House leadership lobbies vs takeover
Local lawmakers on a visit to Washington D.C. yesterday expressed confidence of drawing support of the majority members of the U.S. Congress against efforts to federalize labor and immigration in the CNMI as discussion focused on the island's conditions. In a flurry of meetings they described as the "most productive" yet in their week-long visit, the 10-member delegation raised with key members and staff of the Republican leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives issues affecting the Commonwealth and efforts being undertaken by the island government to develop the economy. Their support, however, hinges on whether the CNMI continues to do the "right thing," according to Speaker Benigno R. Fitial.

EAGI to tackle Soll's nomination in May
Acting Attorney General Herb D. Soll will face the powerful Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations on May 5, less than a week before his appointment expires without its advice and consent. But EAGI chair Sen. Joaquin G. Adriano said he does not foresee any problem for his confirmation, noting that most committee members have expressed support for the governor's choice. The committee has scheduled a public hearing on his nomination at the Tinian Court House and asked government officials, led by Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan and mayors of the three municipalities, as well as lawyers and private sector representatives to attend the town meeting.

Apr. 14, 2003

CHC proposer's appeal denied
The Division of Procurement and Supply has denied-again-the appeal of Casa Felipe, whose bid to supply the Commonwealth Health Center with nursing staff was earlier rejected by the same division. Department of Public Health risk manager Nancy Gottfried said that Casa Felipe is now appealing its case with the Office of the Public Auditor. "Procurement upheld its earlier decision and the appeal is now with the OPA," she said. With the appeal pending, Gottfried said the P&S and the DPH cannot award any contract pending the OPA review of the case. "Right now, we're still evaluating all proposals. We can't move without OPA's decision."

Four cases of probable SARS in Japan—WHO
The mysterious flu-like illness known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS may now have widened its reach to include the CNMI's major tourism market-Japan. The World Health Organization has posted on its website since Friday that four probable SARS cases have been recorded in Japan. The April 12 WHO report did not cite specific areas of SARS infection in Japan. It also did not indicate any local transmission of SARS in the country. The health organization, citing economic projections, said the economic consequences of SARS could amount to $30 billion.

Maharlika

Macaraig nearly done with honorary consul nominations

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Consul General Medardo Macaraig said yesterday he is "making progress" in identifying nominees for the position of honorary consul in the CNMI.

Macaraig disclosed that he has already talked to each of his candidates for Saipan and Rota, both of whom have accepted the nominations.

Macaraig

In the case of Tinian, Macaraig said active Filipino leaders have already recommended the best candidate for the position and he intends to talk to that candidate soon.

Macaraig earlier said that having an honorary consul each for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota would be ideal instead of just having one based on Saipan.

However, he declined to disclose the names of the nominees until they have been submitted to and approved by the DFA office in Manila.

"I have until July or a few months to endorse the recommended honorary consuls to DFA but I will not wait that long," Macaraig told *Saipan Tribune*.

The need for honorary consuls comes after DFA announced in February its decision to close down the Philippine Consulate General on Saipan after over two decades of serving the Filipino community.

The Saipan consulate is among the Philippine diplomatic posts that will be shut down within the year due to budgetary constraints. The others are in Koror, Palau; Caracas, Venezuela; Barcelona, Spain; Dublin, Ireland; Frankfurt, Germany; Stockholm, Sweden; Havana, Cuba; Bucharest, Hungary; and Helsinki, Finland.

Macaraig said the honorary consuls will be reporting to the Philippine Consulate General in Agana, Guam, which will be taking over the responsibilities of the Saipan consulate.

The last day for the Saipan Consulate General is on Oct. 31.

The consul general noted that each of his honorary consul nominees are of good reputation and have made their mark among Filipinos in the CNMI through their active community involvement.

Once the honorary consul candidates have been approved, Macaraig said the Consulate can then turn over to them the responsibility to carry on the handling of key activities and programs such as the quarterly health screenings and livelihood training courses.

Next assignment

Meanwhile, Macaraig said they have yet to receive an order from DFA regarding the next assignment for Saipan Consulate staffers, including himself.

"We're still waiting for the order," he said, adding that finance officer Rowena Tolosa and administrative officer Jose Sto. Domingo will remain after Oct. 31 to prepare reports and wrap up any consulate-related matters.

Macaraig encouraged Filipinos in the CNMI to conduct their business with the consulate this early and not wait for the last minute to avoid inconvenience.

The Consulate General is scheduled to hold its final mobile consular services on Tinian at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel next Saturday, April 21, from 8am to 5pm, and at JC Café on April 22, Sunday, from 9am to 5pm.

The schedule for the final mobile consular services on Rota is the following weekend, April 28 and 29, from 9am to 5pm, at the Northern Marianas College Rota Campus.

For more information, call 234-1850, fax 234-1849, or email saipanpcg@pticom.com.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH
Security officers Almelor G., second from the left, Eugene Magsalin, fourth from left, and Khondoker S. Islam (not in picture) are G4S Secure Solution (CNMI) Inc.'s employees of the month for January 2012 assigned at PIC Saipan. They are shown here after being presented with their certificates of appreciation by G4S CNMI branch manager Moises K. Pangelinan, Operation Manager Kathy and acting Safety Security Farid Islam and Serajul Islam.

Philippine population at 92.34 million

President Benigno S. Aquino III has declared that the official population of the Philippines as of 2010 has reached 92.34 million as determined by the National Statistics Office.

Based on the 2010 Census of Population and Housing conducted by the NSO, the total population of the Philippines as of May 1, 2010 is 92,337,852.

The census counts were made official with the signing by President Aquino of Proclamation No. 362 on March 30, 2012.

The 2010 Census of Population and Housing was undertaken by the NSO in May to June 2010 pursuant to Commonwealth Act 591 and Batas Pambansa Blg. 72.

Batas Pambansa Blg. 72 further accorded the NSO the authority to conduct population censuses every 10 years beginning in 1980, without prejudice to the undertaking of special censuses of agriculture, industry, commerce, housing, and other sectors as may be approved by the National Economic and Development Authority.

The 2010 Census of Population and Housing was conducted with the aim to count the number of residents in the country and their available housing units.

The NSO revealed that the 2010 population is higher by 15.83 million compared to the 2000 population of 76.51 million. In 1990, the total population was 60.70 million.

The Philippine population increased at the rate of 1.90 percent annually, on the average, during the period 2000-2010. This means that there were two persons added per year for every 100 persons in the population.

Population censuses are held every 10 years beginning in 1980.

The NSO is the major statistical agency responsible for generating general purpose statistics and conducting censuses and surveys as may be designated by the National Statistical Coordination Board. ***(Philippine Embassy)***

Low turnout seen in absentee voting registration

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Philippine Consulate General expects a low turnout in the ongoing absentee voting registration for the May 13, 2013, national election.

The registration and certification of qualified absentee voters began last Nov. 2, 2011, and will be done until Oct. 31, 2012, the last day that the consulate will remain open to the public.

Consul General Medardo Macaraig disclosed yesterday that only 33 Filipinos registered from Jan. 1, 2012, until yesterday, April 13.

Consulate records further showed that 40 more Filipino voters registered from Nov. 2 to Dec. 31, 2011, bringing the total number of registered voters to 73.

"Our numbers are not so good but it's expected given that the Filipino population in the CNMI continues to decrease because of the unique situation we have here," Macaraig told *Saipan Tribune*.

The drop in the Filipino population has been attributed mainly to the federalization of the CNMI immigration, but other factors are also factored in such as the continued economic decline on the islands.

With the low number of absentee voters, Macaraig expects this year's number of absentee voters to be lower than that of the last absentee voting registration held from February to August 2009, which had a total of 7,169 registered absentee voters.

Of this number, only 3,341 voted during the May 2010 election.

Macaraig encouraged Filipinos in the CNMI who will be on the islands for the May 13, 2013, national election to exercise their right to vote by registering at the consulate.

Those who may register are qualified Filipino citizens who intend to vote abroad or who will be abroad on election day; Filipino citizens who will be turning 18 years old on or before the day of the election; dual citizens who have re-acquired or retained their Philippine citizenship under the Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act of 2003; and immigrants or permanent residents who execute an Affidavit of Intent to Return upon filing of an application for registration as overseas absentee voter.

Registration requirements for overseas absentee voting are a valid Philippine passport and an accomplished OAV Form No. 1, which can be obtained at the consulate or downloaded and printed from the Commission on Election website, www.comelec.gov.ph/.

For more information, visit the Consulate at the 5th floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe or call 234-1850.

DepEd clarifies policy for student transferees from foreign countries like CNMI

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Philippine Department of Education has an existing policy that gives public and private elementary and secondary schools the discretion in determining the appropriate grade level for student applicants transferring from foreign jurisdictions such as the CNMI.

"In general, except as otherwise indicated, the appropriate grade level should be the next curriculum year following that completed abroad by the applicant," states Order No. 26 dated May 23, 1994.

This policy superseded DepEd's previous policy wherein transferring student applicants in both public and private elementary and secondary schools are referred to the local agency responsible for the management and governing of basic education in the Philippines.

The policy was DepEd's response to the email sent by Consul General Medardo Macaraig after receiving several inquiries from Filipino workers in the CNMI who are parents of U.S.-citizen children and are planning to go back to the Philippines for good.

Macaraig said that many Filipino parents have inquired about how to go about transferring their children to elementary or secondary schools in the country and how to determine what grade level their son or daughter should enroll in.

Macaraig, who also has two daughters currently enrolled in a private school on island, said he understands the concern of these parents, which is why he immediately asked DepEd for an answer.

DepEd's policy states that the foreign educational system where the transferee will come from must have at least six years of elementary level system, at least four years in secondary or high school level, and a total basic education of at least 10 years—the basic education system in the Philippines.

In the CNMI education system, students receive 12 years of basic education because of its middle or junior high school level.

The policy comes with guidelines "for the sake of completeness." For example, a transferee who has completed sixth or seventh grade overseas is eligible for admission to freshman or first year in high school.

A transferee who has completed eighth grade abroad would be eligible for admission to sophomore or second year in high school but will be required to take Filipino I and Social Studies I (Philippine History and Government).

Meanwhile, a transferee who finished the ninth grade overseas will be eligible for third year in high school but will be required to take Filipino I and Social Studies I then Filipino II in his fourth year in high school.

If the transferee has completed 10th grade abroad, he or she is eligible for fourth year in high school but will be required to take Filipino I and Social Studies I only.

On the other hand, if a transferee has completed 11th or 12th grades overseas, he or she may be qualified for the tertiary level "depending on the course they will pursue."

A copy of the policy is posted on the bulletin board of the Consulate General on the fifth floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.

United Filipino Organization president Bong Malasarte said DepEd's policy would ensure that transferees from the CNMI would know which grade levels they can enroll in when they go to the Philippine where they will continue their studies.

China sends 3rd ship in standoff with Philippines

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—China deployed a third ship Thursday in an area of the disputed South China Sea where a tense standoff with Philippine vessels has dragged on, sparking alarm in Manila.

Chinese and Filipino diplomats have been scrambling to resolve the dangerous impasse at the Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines that erupted Tuesday. A Philippine warship attempted to arrest several Chinese fishermen accused of illegal entry and poaching, but was prevented by the arrival of two Chinese surveillance ships.

One of the Chinese ships blocked the entrance to a lagoon at the shoal, where at least eight Chinese fishing vessels were anchored. The Chinese ships also ordered the Philippine warship to leave Scarborough, claiming Chinese sovereignty over the rich fishing ground.

But the warship has stayed put, arguing it is Philippine territory.

Philippine navy chief Vice Admiral Alexander Pama said the BRP *Gregorio del Pilar* warship was withdrawn from Scarborough Thursday for refueling and was replaced by a Philippine coast guard ship. The move was not a retreat or concession of any kind to China, he said.

AP

In this April 10, 2012 released by the Philippine Navy, Filipino naval personnel look at giant clam shells on board a Chinese fishing vessel at the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, near the Philippines.

"We're not retreating from our own territory," Pama said.

Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario said he will ask Chinese ambassador Ma Keqing to explain the arrival of a third Chinese surveillance ship at Scarborough, which he said lies well within his country's territorial waters and off the northwestern Philippine province of Zambales. Despite the new concern, del Rosario said he would continue talks with Ma to resolve the impasse, possibly this week.

"We're watching developments and at the same time we're pursuing the diplomatic track," Del Rosario said. "We're moving forward but it's still a work in progress."

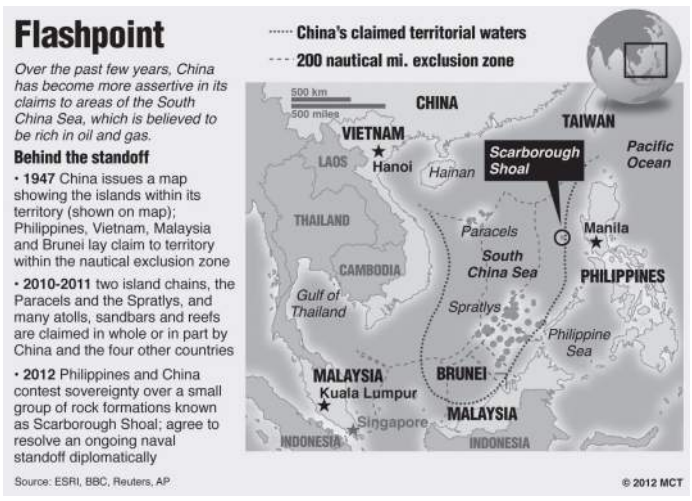
Del Rosario proposed an arrangement to end the impasse during talks with Ma, who was expected to relay the Chinese government's reply soon, according to two Philippine officials monitoring the negotiations.

Del Rosario declined to provide details of the proposal, but said it was a "win-win" solution designed to rapidly end the standoff. The stranded Chinese fishermen were not expected to be able to stay for long at the uninhabited shoal because they may run out of food and other provisions.

Del Rosario said he wanted the problem resolved before he leaves Sunday for a weeklong U.S. trip.

Aside from Scarborough, the South China Sea is home to a myriad of competing territorial claims, most notably the Spratly Islands south of the shoal, an island chain claimed by China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan. The barren Spratly islands, reefs and coral outcrops are believed to be in rich in oil and gas and the overlapping claims have long been feared as Asia's next flashpoint for armed conflict.

The Chinese Embassy said the fishing boats had taken shelter from a storm in the lagoon and accused Philippine troops of harassment. But Philippine authorities claimed the fishermen illegally entered their territory then collected giant clams, live sharks and other endangered marine species in violation of local laws.


Flashpoint
Over the past few years, China has become more assertive in its claims to areas of the South China Sea, which is believed to be rich in oil and gas.
Behind the standoff
• 1947 China issues a map showing the islands within its territory (shown on map); Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei lay claim to territory within the nautical exclusion zone
• 2010-2011 two island chains, the Paracels and the Spratlys, and many atolls, sandbars and reefs are claimed in whole or in part by China and the four other countries
• 2012 Philippines and China contest sovereignty over a small group of rock formations known as Scarborough Shoal; agree to resolve an ongoing naval standoff diplomatically
Source: ESRI, BBC, Reuters, AP
China's claimed territorial waters
200 nautical mi. exclusion zone
500 km
500 miles
CHINA
TAIWAN
VIETNAM
Hanoi
LAOS
Hainan
Scarborough Shoal
Pacific Ocean
THAILAND
Paracels
South China Sea
Manila
PHILIPPINES
CAMBODIA
Gulf of Thailand
Spratlys
Philippine Sea
MALAYSIA
Kuala Lumpur
BRUNEI
Singapore
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By TINA G. SANTOS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

US visa fees hiked

MANILA, Philippines—Starting Friday, the US Embassy is raising fees for some nonimmigrant visas, including visas for tourists, business travelers and students.

Filipinos applying for tourist, business, crew member, student and journalist visas will have to pay $160, from the old $140.

But fees will be lower for all immigrant visas, as well as those for fiancé/ fiancée visas and trader/investor visas.

According to a statement posted on the embassy's website, the reduction in immigrant visa fees has become possible because a new US law allows the Department of State to seek reimbursement from other federal agencies such as the US Citizenship and Immigration Service.

"US embassies must collect higher fees for tourist and other types of nonimmigrant visas because US law requires the Department of State to recover the costs of processing those types of visas," the embassy said.

"The new fees more accurately reflect the costs of visa processing services as determined in a US government study completed last December."

Starting July 13, however, applicants who had paid application fees at the old rate will have to pay the difference between the old rate and the new rate.

For visa categories that have lower fees starting April 13, applicants who have already paid will get no refunds.

Philippines among friendliest to travelers

MANILA, Philippines—The Philippines isn't among the world's most disrespectful countries for travelers and is in fact at the bottom of the list of nations whose people never smile and are particularly unfriendly.

Forbes magazine cited the results of a survey conducted by travel search cite Skyscanner.com, which showed that the top four rudest nations for travelers are France with 19.29 percent of the votes; Russia with 16.56 percent of the votes; Great Britain with 10.43; and Germany with 9.93.

Of the 33 countries listed in the survey, the Philippines with 0.17 percent of the votes and the Caribbean and Brazil, each with 0.08 percent of the votes, are considered by travelers as the places with the least rude locals.

Skyscanner's survey received over 1,200 responses. Sixty-five percent of the respondents were from the UK and Ireland, while the rest were from North America, Australia, and other places in Europe.

"Some of the perceived rudeness may be attributable to cultural differences rather than anything intentional," said Forbes's contributing writer Andrew Bender.

He cited the observation of Tatiana Danilova, Skyscanner's Russian market manager, on the seeming unfriendliness of the Russian language.

"The Russian language is not as polite as English, so when Russians translate directly from Russian to English, it can sound rude to an English speaker even if they don't mean it to," said Danilova.

SURVEY RANKING

Complete list of responses:

French	19.29
Russian	16.56
British	10.43
German	9.93
Other	6.37
Chinese	4.3
American	3.39
Spanish	3.15
Italian	2.24
Polish	2.24
Turkish	2.15
Indian	1.9
Swiss	1.9
Greek	1.74
Croatian	1.57
Austrian	1.41
Cypriot	1.24
Egyptian	1.24
Korean	1.24
Norwegian	0.99
Australian	0.91
Dutch	0.83
Irish	0.83
Swedish	0.83
Japanese	0.66
Danish	0.5
Canadian	0.41
New Zealander	0.41
Indonesian	0.41
Portuguese	0.33
Thai	0.25
Filipino	0.17
Caribbean	0.08
Brazilian	0.08

The same principle may also apply to France.

"As our closest neighbors, there has long been a familiar rivalry between the UK and France," said Sam Baldwin, Skyscanner's travel editor. " "Even the French acknowledge that the way they are perceived is not entirely without basis." ***(Philippine Star)***

VFW Post honors 1st Filipino to get Medal of Honor

On April 2, 2012, VFW Post 9892 in La Union, Philippines, led by Post Commander Frank Hilliard, hosted reburial and memorial honors for Pvt. Jose Baliton-Nisperos, the 1st Filipino Scout awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Beginning in 2008 VFW Post 9892 in La Union, Philippines became aware that the first Filipino recipient of the Medal of Honor, Private Jose B. Nisperos, hailed from San Fernando City, La Union. In keeping with our congressionally directed mandate to "perpetuate the memory and history of our dead…" VFW Post 9892 set in motion efforts to find and honor his resting place.

In 2011, VFW Post member JD Keller (American Legion China Post 1 Commander), made contact with one of Nisperos' great-grandchildren. The VFW Post plan for the memorial was well received by the City of San Fernando government, which approved a plan for construction of an appropriate monument, in a highly visible area of the Lingsat Cemetery for his re-internment.

There were only a handful of Filipino soldiers in the past who were bestowed with the highest military distinction given by the United States government—the Medal of Honor. Private Jose B. Nisperos is recognized as the first Filipino to receive the United States Congressional Medal of Honor.

Jose B. Nisperos grew up in the province of San Fernando, La Union and was later recruited to the 34th Company United States Army Philippine Scouts Division. During this time, the Army was engaged in a battle to suppress the Moro Resistance (1899-1913) in the Southern Philippines. In 1911, Private Nisperos along with the Philippine Scout's 34th Company, was sent to the Basilan Island to subdue the rebel forces. On Sept. 24, 1911, Nisperos, together with his mother unit, the 34th Company, was ambushed by a large group of rebels armed with bolos and spears. Due to Nisperos' action at the time of the siege, the 34th Company Philippine Scout was spared from total annihilation. For his gallant action, bravery, and valor in the battlefield, Private Jose B. Nisperos was awarded on Nov. 25, 1912, the United States Congressional Medal of Honor. He was medically discharged due to the severity of his wounds and given a pension of $55 a month. He died in 1922 after a long illness at the age of 34.

Excerpt from the Medal of Honor Citation:

PRIVATE JOSE BALITON-NISPEROS
(December 30 1887- September 01 1922)
United States Congressional Medal of Honor
General Order No. 64 United States
War Department
Dated November 25, 1912

For The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private Jose B. Nisperos, United States Army, for most distinguished gallantry on 24 September 1911, while serving with 34th Company, Philippine Scouts, in action at Lapurap, Basilan Island, Philippine Islands. Having been badly wounded (his left arm was broken and lacerated and he had received several spear wounds in the body so that he could not stand), Private Nisperos continued to fire his rifle with one hand until the enemy was repulsed, thereby aiding materially in preventing the annihilation of his party and the mutilation of their bodies.

Samu't Sari

PROMOTING THE CNMI

MVA

The Marianas Visitors Authority, along with partners Century Tours and Tinian Dynasty Travel, promoted golfing opportunities in the Northern Marianas during the China Golf Show held on March 16-18, 2012, in Beijing.

HIGH-TECH JUSTICE

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Associate Judge Joseph Camacho, left foreground, and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, right foreground, lead other signatories to an 11-page memorandum of understanding establishing a Criminal Justice Information System in the governor's conference room on Capital Hill Thursday afternoon.

NEW MINIVANS

MONETH G. DEPOSA

Jack Diaz, Public School System FTA program manager, stands besides the new minivans procured by PSS using grants from Federal Transportation Administration. Beginning this fiscal year, PSS can no longer directly apply for FTA grants after the establishment of Commonwealth Office of Public Transit Authority last year. The new office, which is under the Executive Branch, is THE designated CNMI agency to review, apply, receive, manage, and use federal grants from the FTA.

MTEC OUTREACH

MVA

Community projects specialist Frank Tudela of the Marianas Visitors Authority, left, quizzes students of the Marianas High Hospitality & Tourism Class on April 4, 2012. The MVA and MTEC dialogued with students on the importance of the tourism industry as part of on-going public education outreach.

MVA

Marianas High School student Gemma Noelani Somol wins a gift certificate during a presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council to her class on April 3, 2012. Presenting the award is MTEC Chairwoman Vicky Benavente.

GETTING INVOLVED

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Northern Marianas Insurance Association recently took part in the Tagaman Triathlon by sponsoring one aid station. The Century Insurance Corp. is member of this association.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Advanced happy anniversary greetings go out to Bernard and Joan Paraiso, who will be celebrating 12 years of married bliss on Sunday, April 15, 2012! A marriage made in heaven is beautiful and rare. And brings a life of happiness, just like the one you share. Your trust in one another is a very precious thing. And you deserve a lovely day for all the joy you bring. Happy 12th wedding anniversary, Dad & Mom! Greetings come from Joanie, Joseph, and Brianna.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Birthday shoutout to Jo Anne Hernandez! May God bless you today and always, enjoy your special day! Special greetings from your Joeten Ace Hardware family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Business

China's economic growth falls to nearly 3-year low

BEIJING (AP)—China's economic growth fell to its lowest level in nearly three years in the first quarter but analysts said the economy should rebound in coming months.

Growth in the world's second-biggest economy declined to a still-robust 8.1 percent in the three months ending in March, data showed Friday. That was down from the previous quarter's 8.9 percent and the weakest rate since the second quarter of 2009.

China's rapid growth has declined steadily since 2010 as a slump in global demand battered its exporters and Beijing tightened lending and investment curbs to cool an overheated economy and surging inflation.

An uncontrolled slump could have global repercussions, hurting demand for oil, industrial components and consumer goods at a time when U.S. and European growth are weak. It also might fuel political tensions in China as the ruling Communist Party prepares for a sensitive, once-a-decade handover of power to younger leaders.

"This quarter's growth was pretty weak," said IHS Global Insight analyst Xianfang Ren. "Starting from next quarter, growth should strengthen."

The World Bank and private sector analysts expect China to achieve a "soft landing," with growth rebounding later this year. But some worry growth might fall too abruptly, raising the risk of job losses.

Last year's unexpectedly sharp plunge in demand for China's exports due to U.S. and European economic woes prompted communist leaders to reverse course and ease controls on bank lending to help struggling manufacturers.

"The `soft landing' scenario is very likely," said Frances Cheung, senior strategist for Credit Agricole CIB in Hong Kong.

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund expect 8.2 percent growth for China this year, below 2010's explosive 10.4 percent expansion but far ahead of the low single-digit forecasts for the United States, Japan and Europe.

Other data showed Chinese factory activity, retail sales and exports accelerating over the course of the first quarter, though still weaker than last year.

Industrial production rose 11.9 percent over a year earlier in March, up 0.5 percentage points from the January-February period. Retail sales rose 15.2 percent, also up 0.5 percentage points from the previous two months.

AP

A worker climbs on scaffolding at a road construction site in Beijing Thursday, April 12, 2012.

Rise in US exports brightens outlook for economy

WASHINGTON (AP)—The outlook for U.S. economic growth is looking slightly better.

American businesses sold a record number of goods and services in Europe, China and other foreign markets in February, while imports declined.

Many economists began raising their forecasts for January-March growth after seeing Thursday's government report on the lowest trade deficit since the fall.

And the jump in exports contributed to the second straight day of gains on Wall Street. The Dow Jones industrial average closed up 181 points—its second largest gain of the year.

The economy still has a long way back to full health. More people applied for unemployment benefits last week, the government said in separate report. That followed last week's report that hiring slowed sharply in March after three months of strong job growth.

The mixed economic picture, along with tame inflation cited in a third report, gives the Federal Reserve more ammunition to stick with its plan to hold interest rates near record lows when it meets later this month.

"The underlying message is actually a good one," said Paul Dales, senior U.S. economist at Capital Economics, after the trio of reports was released. "It suggests that growth is a bit stronger."

The U.S. trade deficit narrowed more than 12 percent in February to $46 billion. That's down from $52.5 billion in January, the widest deficit in three and a half years.

Exports rose to a record $181.2 billion, while imports dropped to $227.2 billion.

A smaller trade deficit reduces the drag on growth. More exports help the economy grow because they typically boost factory production, which can fuel more hiring and lead to greater consumer spending.

And fewer imports subtract less from growth, largely because consumers are spending less on overseas goods and services. Most economists were encouraged by the trade report, as well as a report earlier this week that said wholesale businesses restocked at a faster pace in February. That also meant factories were busier because businesses anticipated more consumer spending in the months ahead.

Dales said he expects growth only slowed in the January-March quarter to an annual rate of 2.5 percent. While that's down from 3 percent annual rate at the end of last year, it's better than the 2 percent rate he had initially projected.

Craig Alexander, chief economist with TD Bank Financial Group, also raised his forecast, although he's slightly more bearish. He now expects first-quarter growth at an annual rate of 2.3 percent, up from his initial 1.9 percent forecast.

HP shows recovery following PC flip-flop fallout

NEW YORK (AP)—Hewlett-Packard Co. is showing signs of recovery as it strengthened its position as the world's largest maker of personal computers and gained back some of the business it had lost while weighing whether to dump its PC division.

HP's stock jumped more than 7 percent Thursday, after research groups Gartner and IDC released their PC shipment estimates for the first three months of the year. HP was the best performer in the Dow Jones industrial average.

HP is in the midst of a turnaround effort under a new chief, former eBay Inc. CEO Meg Whitman. Her predecessor, Leo Apotheker, wanted to sell or spin off the PC business, a plan that contributed to his ouster in September after 11 months on the job. Whitman decided a month later to keep the unit, despite the growing competitive challenge the PC industry faces from smartphones and tablet computers.

The company lost market share during that period of uncertainty. With PCs increasingly commoditized, customers were free to choose a rival and avoid wondering whether HP would be around to offer product support in a few months.

According to IDC, HP's worldwide market share dropped to 16 percent in the fourth quarter, after HP signaled in mid-August that it might shed the PC business. HP's share had been nearly 18 percent earlier in the year.

IDC estimated late Wednesday that HP's worldwide share in the first quarter of 2012 was back to 18 percent.

In the U.S., IDC said, HP's first-quarter share was 28 percent, nearly back to what it had been last summer. In the holiday quarter, it had dropped to about 23 percent.

Analyst Brian G. Alexander at Raymond James said Thursday that the numbers suggest the fallout from HP's indecision had eased. He also said they "add support to our view that HP is not a broken company."

The worldwide market share for Lenovo Group Ltd. fell slightly to 13.4 percent, from 13.6 percent in the fourth quarter. But Lenovo was strong compared with a year earlier. First-quarter shipments rose 44 percent from the same period in 2011, when market share was less than 10 percent and Lenovo was fourth rather than second among PC makers.

The third-largest PC maker, Round Rock, Texas-based Dell Inc., saw market share drop slightly in the first quarter to 11.6 percent, from 12.5 percent in the previous quarter. Shipments fell 2 percent from a year earlier.

Google to split stock to keep power with founders

NEW YORK (AP)—Google improved its short-term finances even as it seeks to preserve its long-term interests.

The online search leader reported a 61 percent increase in its net income for the first three months of the year and announced plans to issue a new class of stock to shareholders. The new shares won't have any voting power and will help Google's senior leaders keep control years from now.

Under the plan, expected to win approval in June, all current stockholders would get one share of the new Class C stock for each share they now own. This effectively splits Google's stock price in half.

Employees given Google stock in the future would get the non-voting stock, allowing voting power to remain with existing shareholders. The same would hold true for companies that Google buys using its stock.

Stock splits reduce prices for each share, allowing smaller investors to participate. Although Google said investors had been clamoring for one, the decision announced Thursday seemed driven more by a desire to retain control.

Without change, senior leaders would eventually lose their voting power. CEO Larry Page and fellow co-founder Sergey Brin said that would undermine "our aspirations for Google over the very long term."

Since it went public in 2004, Google's founders have emphasized a need to insulate management from short-term pressures. That's a view now commonly held by the newest generation of freshly public—or soon-to-be public—tech companies such as Zynga Inc. and Facebook Inc.

Even so, issuing shares with no voting power is unusual. But that's been Google's way since its beginning, even as it turned into a multi-national corporation. The company held a "Dutch auction" for its initial public offering of stock, allocating new shares to the highest bidders, including small investors. Traditional IPOs favor large investment banks.

Google's founders argue that Google will be more successful if the company concentrates on its long-term vision. This can mean short-term stumbles in meeting Wall Street's targets for earnings and revenue, as well as investments that may not bear fruition for years.

"These kinds of investments are not for the faint-hearted," the founders said in a letter posted online.

In other words, they don't want investors voting with short-term interests in mind.

In the conference call, analysts seemed to shrug off Google's stock split plan and focused instead on upcoming products, advertising rates and the company's plans for tablet computers based on its Android operating system.

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
12,986.58	1,387.56	3,055.55
181.19	18.86	39.09
+1.41%	+1.38%	+1.30%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	0.9621	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7625	Philippine Peso	42.695
British Pound	0.6273	Indian Rupee	51.3812	Singapore Dollar	1.2487
Canadian Dollar	0.9962	Indonesian Rupiah	9181.75	South Korean Won	1134.12
Chinese Yuan	6.291	Japanese Yen	81.049	Swiss Franc	0.9126
Euro	0.7593	Malaysian Ringgit	3.0603	Taiwan Dollar	29.5025
		New Zealand Dollar	1.2058	Thailand Baht	30.75

Nation

Prosecutors: Zimmerman ignored warning to back off

SANFORD, Fla. (AP)—After weeks in hiding, George Zimmerman made his first courtroom appearance Thursday in the shooting of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, and prosecutors outlined their murder case in court papers, saying the neighborhood watch volunteer followed and confronted the black teenager after a police dispatcher told him to back off.

The brief outline, contained in an affidavit filed in support of the second-degree murder charges, appeared to contradict Zimmerman's claim that Martin attacked him after he had turned away and was returning to his vehicle.

In the affidavit, prosecutors also said that Martin's mother identified cries for help heard in the background of a 911 call as her son's. There had been some question as to whether Martin or Zimmerman was the one crying out.

The account of the shooting was released as Zimmerman, 28, appeared at a four-minute hearing in a jailhouse courtroom, setting in motion what could be a long, drawn-out process, or an abrupt and disappointingly short one for the Martin family because of the strong legal protections contained in Florida's "stand your ground" law on self-defense.

During the hearing, Zimmerman stood up straight, held his head high and wore a gray jail jumpsuit. He spoke only to answer "Yes, sir" twice after he was asked basic questions from the judge, who was not in the courtroom but on closed-circuit TV. The defendant's hair was shaved down to stubble and he had a thin goatee. His hands were shackled in front of him.

He did not enter a plea; that will happen at his arraignment, which was set for May 29. Zimmerman's attorney, Mark O'Mara, has said his client will plead not guilty. A bond hearing for Zimmerman likely will be held April 20, O'Mara said late Thursday.

To prove second-degree murder, prosecutors must show that Zimmerman committed an "imminently dangerous" act that showed a "depraved" lack of regard for human life. The charge carries a mandatory sentence of 25 years in prison and a maximum of life.

The special prosecutor in the case, Angela Corey, has refused to explain exactly how she arrived at the charge. But in the affidavit, prosecutors said Zimmerman spotted Martin while patrolling his gated community, got out of his vehicle and followed the young man.

Prosecutors interviewed a friend of Martin's who was talking to him over the phone moments before the shooting. His parents' lawyer has said that Martin was talking to his girlfriend back in Miami.

"During this time, Martin was on the phone with a friend and described to her what was happening," the affidavit said. "The witness advised that Martin was scared because he was being followed through the complex by an unknown male and didn't know why."

Trayvon Martin case timeline
Key events in the case of Trayvon Martin, who was killed while walking in a community in Sanford, Fla., where his father lived:
Feb. 26 Neighbors call police to report hearing a scuffle and gunshot; Martin found dead; neighborhood watch captain George Zimmerman take into custody; no charges are filed
March 16 Zimmerman is heard on 911 tapes saying he is following Martin; dispatcher tells him not to; cries for help also heard; Martin's parents demand an arrest; petition circulates
March 19 U.S. Justice Dept. launches investigation
March 21 Martin's parents join in "Million Hoodie March" in New York City to call for justice; Martin was wearing a hoodie when he was killed; other hoodie marches held in tribute around the nation
At age 14
March 22 Sanford police chief steps down amid charges of mishandling case and no-confidence vote by city commissioners; Rev. Al Sharpton organizes large rally in Sanford to call for Zimmerman's arrest
Protestors in Chicago
March 23 President Barack Obama mentions Martin case at the end of a press conference; "If I had a son, he would look like Trayvon."
March 24 At protest in Florida, group announces $10,000 bounty for the capture of Zimmerman, who is now in hiding
April 10 Zimmerman's lawyers say they no longer represent him because they had not heard from him
April 11 Prosecutor announces 2nd-degree murder charge against Zimmerman who is now in custody
Martin's parents
Source: MSNBC, AP, MCT Photo Service
Graphic: Judy Treible
© 2012 MCT

During a recorded call to a police dispatcher, Zimmerman "made reference to people he felt had committed and gotten away with break-ins in his neighborhood. Later while talking about Martin, Zimmerman stated `these a------s, they always get away' and also said `these f-----g punks,' said the affidavit, available at http://apne.ws/Itn7Nu .

It continued: "When the police dispatcher realized Zimmerman was pursuing Martin, he instructed Zimmerman not to do that and that the responding officer would meet him. Zimmerman disregarded the police dispatcher and continued to follow Martin who was trying to return to his home."

"Zimmerman confronted Martin and a struggle ensued," prosecutors said in their account.

The account provided no details on the struggle other than to say that witnesses heard numerous calls for help and that Martin's mother reviewed the 911 recordings and recognized her son's cry.

Zimmerman told authorities that Martin attacked him as he going back to his vehicle, punched him in the face, knocked him down and began slamming head against the sidewalk.

At Thursday's hearing, the case was assigned to Circuit Judge Jessica Recksiedler, a 39-year-old former assistant state attorney from Sanford who was elected to the bench in 2010. Zimmerman is being held without bail at the county jail.

For all the relief among civil rights activists over the arrest, legal experts warned there is a real chance it could get thrown out before it ever goes to trial because of Florida's "stand your ground" law, which gives people a broad right to use deadly force without having to retreat from a fight.

At a pretrial hearing, Zimmerman's lawyers would only have to prove by a preponderance of evidence—a relatively low legal standard—that he acted in self-defense in order to get a judge to toss out the second-murder charges. And if that fails and the case does go to trial, the defense can raise the argument all over again.

There's a "high likelihood it could be dismissed by the judge even before the jury gets to hear the case," Florida defense attorney Richard Hornsby said. Karin Moore, an assistant professor of law at Florida A&M University, said the law "puts a tremendous burden on the state to prove that it wasn't self-defense."

At some point soon, Zimmerman's lawyer is expected to ask the judge for a hearing on "stand your ground."

"It is going to be a facet of this defense, I'm sure," O'Mara said in an interview. "That statute has some troublesome portions to it, and we're now going to have some conversations and discussions about it as a state. But right now it is the law of Florida and it is the law that is going to have an impact on this case."

Martin family and their lawyer acknowledged the arrest is just a first step.

"I think that it will start the process that we are pushing for," said Martin's father, Tracy Martin, "but we can't just stop because we have an arrest. We got to keep pushing to get a conviction, and after a conviction we have to certainly continue to push to get a stiff sentence."

Hasn't worked? Obama stands up for Romney's wife

WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House—and President Barack Obama himself—rushed into a damage control campaign Thursday to blunt the impact of a Democratic consultant's suggestion that Ann Romney isn't qualified to discuss the economy because she "hasn't worked a day in her life."

"It was the wrong thing to say," Obama declared in an interview with WCMH-TV in Columbus, Ohio, standing up for Republican rival Mitt Romney's wife with Democrats suddenly on the defensive over women's issues for the first time this election year. Of the "ill-advised statement" by consultant Hilary Rosen, he added, "It's not something that I subscribe to."

In an interview with Cedar Rapids, Iowa, TV station KCRG, the president said "there's no tougher job than being a mom" and cited the efforts of his wife, Michelle, and his own mother, a single woman with two children.

"That's work," he said. "So, anybody who would argue otherwise probably needs to rethink their statement."

The president's remarks were his answer to Rosen's comments and the Twitter war they ignited. The mere fact that he weighed in on the uproar left no doubt that Democrats want to leave nothing to chance in their effort to keep female voters in the party fold. Women, who are the majority of voters in presidential election years, lean heavily Democratic, and polls show Obama holds a commanding lead among this group so far this year in battleground states.

Mitt Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, must win about 40 percent of female voters to have a chance at beating Obama, and he's targeting married women and mothers who tend to be more conservative. Among this group, Ann Romney is popular and has been the candidate's chief surrogate on how the struggling economy has affected women and families.

So while the candidate remained silent Thursday, his campaign pounced when Rosen said on CNN Wednesday that Ann Romney was no expert on the economy.

"His wife has actually never worked a day in her life," Rosen said. "She's never really dealt with the kinds of economic issues that a majority of women in this country are facing."

Rosen apologized late Thursday, after first lady Michelle Obama tweeted her own support for women and mothers.

The backlash to Rosen's comments was bipartisan, brutal and swift, crackling across Twitter, cable television and old-fashioned telephone lines. It appeared to have reignited the "Mommy Wars" debate, at least for now, over choices many women make as they juggle motherhood with the work most need to pay bills, college tuition and a semblance of financial security for their families.

Romney courts gun-rights group in presidential bid

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP)—Running for the Senate in Massachusetts, Mitt Romney once assured voters in a state with strong gun-control laws: "I don't line up with the NRA." Now the likely Republican presidential nominee, Romney will headline the National Rifle Association's annual convention Friday and assure tens of thousands of gun-rights activists that he's squarely on their side.

Coming just days after rival Rick Santorum dropped out of the nomination race, the NRA convention in St. Louis provides Romney an opportunity to shore up his credentials with an important conservative constituency that badly wants to oust Democratic President Barack Obama.

Romney leads a list of prominent Republicans—including Santorum, Newt Gingrich, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker—who are scheduled to address more than 65,000 convention registrants during a session billed as a "celebration of American values." Although Obama has virtually ignored gun issues during his term, the NRA considers him a foe and plans to mount an aggressive effort against him.

Romney

The NRA has spent $20 million to $30 million in past presidential elections, said NRA spokesman Andrew Arulanandam. It hopes to exceed that amount this year in an effort that is likely to include mail, phone calls and TV, radio, Internet and newspaper ads, he said.

As the all-but-certain Republican presidential nominee, Romney hopes to reap the rewards of the NRA's broad network, which includes more than 4 million dues-paying members.

"Governor Romney is a strong supporter of Second Amendment rights," said campaign spokesman Ryan Williams, referring to gun rights. "He's always supported the Second Amendment and as president would continue to support the Second Amendment."

Yet Romney's alignment with the NRA also comes at a time when gun laws have been under national scrutiny. The NRA was a main backer of Florida's "stand your ground" law, which gives people latitude to use deadly force rather than retreat from danger. That self-defense law has been much discussed in relation to the February shooting in which a neighborhood watch volunteer fatally shot an unarmed teenager. After authorities initially declined to charge him, George Zimmerman was charged Wednesday with second-degree murder in the death of Trayvon Martin. Zimmerman's attorney has said the defendant will plead not guilty and invoke the "stand your ground" law.

Asia

NKorea says satellite 'failed to enter into orbit'

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—North Korea's much-anticipated rocket launch ended quickly in failure early Friday, splintering into pieces over the Yellow Sea soon after takeoff.

North Korea acknowledged in an announcement broadcast on state TV that a satellite launched hours earlier from the west coast failed to enter into orbit. The U.S. and South Korea also declared the launch a failure.

The Kwangmyongsong-3 satellite was fired from the Sohae Satellite Launching Station in Tongchang-ri along the west coast at 7:38 a.m., but failed to reach orbit, the state-run Korean Central News Agency said.

"Scientists, technicians and experts are now looking into the cause of the failure," KCNA said.

U.S. and South Korean officials said hours earlier that the rocket splintered into pieces about a minute after liftoff over the Yellow Sea, calling it a provocative failed test of missile technology.

In response to the launch, Washington announced it was suspending plans to contribute food aid to the North in exchange for a rollback of its nuclear programs.

The U.S., Japan, Britain and other nations had been urging North Korea to cancel a launch seen as a covert test of the rocket technology also used to send a long-range missile to strike the U.S.

North Korea refused to back down, saying the rocket would only carry a civilian satellite, touting it as a major technological achievement to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of the country's founder, Kim Il Sung, on Sunday.

Still, the rocket failure is a major embarrassment for Pyongyang, which has invited dozens of international journalists to observe the rocket launch and other celebrations.

It has staked its pride on the satellite, seeing it as a show of strength amid persistent economic hardship while Kim Il Sung's young grandson, Kim Jong Un, solidifies power following the death of his father, longtime leader Kim Jong Il, four months ago.

AP

Cameramen stand by to cover the PAC-3 surface to air missile units at the Defense Ministry in Tokyo, Japan, Friday, April 13, 2012. North Korea fired a long-range rocket early Friday, South Korean defense officials said, defying international warnings against a launch widely seen as a provocation.

Indonesians feel lucky after escape from quakes

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia (AP)—Residents surveying damage from two powerful earthquakes that reignited memories of the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami said Thursday they could hardly believe their luck.

Five people died from heart attacks, and a few others were injured as mobs used cars and motorcycles to flee to high ground in Indonesia's westernmost province of Aceh—closest to the epicenters.

But aside from cracks in the walls of houses and structural damage to one bridge, you would hardly know anything happened, said Usman Basyah, smiling as he handed change to customers at his small street stall.

"I really feel my prayers were answered this time," said Basyah, who lost one of his sons in the disaster eight years ago. "I'm so grateful. We've gone through enough trauma already."

Another man, who spent the night in a mosque sheltering hundreds of others who were worried about the regular aftershocks, agreed.

"Of course, I was scared," said Nasir Djamil. "We all were. But were much better prepared this time. I think we learned from the last nightmare. We knew what we had to do.

That was the sentiment across much of the globe.

The first quake, measuring 8.6, triggered a tsunami watch in more than two dozen nations and island territories, from Australia and India to as far off as Africa. Hours later, a powerful 8.2-magnitude aftershock hit.

Indian Ocean nations acted quickly. In southern India, police, including some on horseback, spread out across Chennai's popular Marina Beach to enforce an evacuation. Sri Lankan tsunami alert teams on motorcycles drove along the coast near the capital, urging people to move to higher ground.

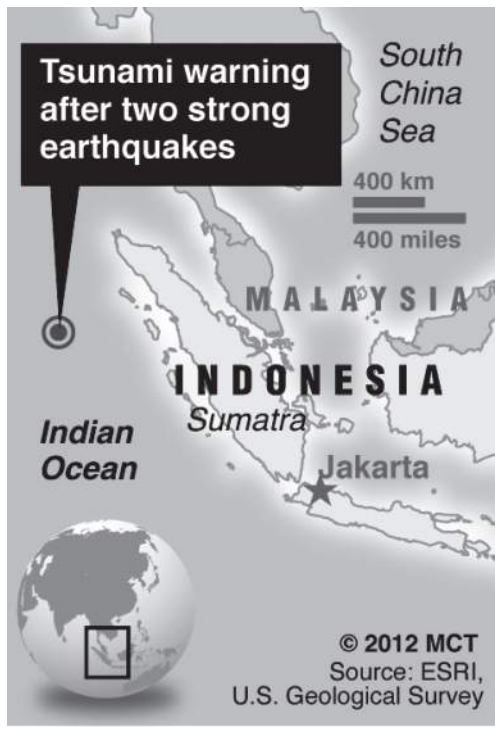
Warning buoys—put to sea after the 2004 disaster that killed 230,000 people in a dozen nations, three quarters of them in Aceh—accurately predicted that the tsunami would not be big.

Sirens sounded along coasts and warnings spread like wildfire by mobile phone text messaging. And, for the most part, evacuations appeared to go smoothly.

Still, traffic-clogged streets in Aceh pointed to the need for better organization.

Twenty minutes after the quake hit, cars and motorcycles were at a standstill in areas that, in 2004, were inundated with water, sweeping tens of thousands to their deaths.

"It wouldn't have been as bad," said Iskandar, a local disaster management official. "But I dare to say, if there had a been a repeat, there would have been deaths."



The real luck came with the type of quake that hit.

Indonesia, a sprawling archipelagic nation of 240 million people, straddles a series of fault lines that makes it one of the most seismically active places on the planet.

Aceh, which sits off a subduction zone fault, were one tectonic plate of the Earth's crust dives under another, has experienced numerous megathrust quakes over time.

It's these temblors that cause the seabed to rise or drop vertically, displacing massive amounts of water that race across the ocean at jetliner speeds.

But experts say Wednesday's twin tremors occurred on what is known as a strike-slip fault. The sea floor shifted horizontally, creating more of a vibration in the water.

As result, the only wave generated was less than 80 centimeters (30 inches) high. It washed ashore on deserted beaches nearest the epicenter.

Like so many people, Rahmi Novianti, a 25-year-old housewife, had been fearing the worst.

"I was running out of my house, I could see the tsunami coming in my mind, the entire village again being destroyed," she said. "That it didn't happen really feels like a blessing."

Though the shaking on land was fierce, lasting nearly four minutes and triggering mass panic, only five people died, Asmadi Syam, head of Aceh's disaster management agency, told MetroTV.

He said all were from heart attacks, presumably triggered by the panic.

At least four other people were injured.

Suu Kyi party finds lawmakers' oath unacceptable

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Aung San Suu Kyi's party raised the prospect of a major hitch in Myanmar's political reforms Thursday, saying it may not take the seats it won in Parliament because the lawmakers' oath of office has unacceptable wording.

The National League for Democracy's platform ahead of the April 1 by-elections called for amending some sections of the constitution that the party considers undemocratic. A clause in the oath saying lawmakers have to protect and safeguard the Constitution contradicts the party's policy, NLD spokesman Nyan Win said.

The party won 43 of the 44 seats it contested, include one won by Suu Kyi herself. It would be the biggest opposition party in the military-dominated legislature that convenes April 23, and Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace laureate and former political prisoner, would have a voice in government for the first time.

"We as citizens will abide by the Constitution but the oath says we have to protect the constitution. This is contradictory to our party policy," said Nyan Win. "To enable our elected representatives to take the oath, we need the oath of affirmation changed or we get a clearer interpretation of what it means by protecting the constitution."

The by-election's outcome was considered a major step toward reconciliation after decades of military rule in Myanmar, where President Thein Sein has undertaken political reforms since taking office a year ago.

Wooing Suu Kyi's party to rejoin politics after it boycotted the 2010 election was a key turning point in the government's campaign for Western economic sanctions imposed during military rule to be lifted.

The oath is in an appendix to the constitution, and it is unclear if it can be changed without going through the legal procedure for constitutional change, requiring the approval of 75 percent of Parliament. A court ruling might accomplish the same goal.

Suu Kyi in her 15-minute party platform presentation and other campaign speeches called for amending the 2008 constitution—which was drafted with the army's guidance—saying that its automatic allocation of 25 percent of the parliamentary seats to unelected representatives of the military is not democratic.

Win Tin, a senior NLD member, told U.S.-funded Radio Free Asia that Suu Kyi had discussed the matter with Thein Sein when they met Wednesday. It wasn't clear what step she would take regarding the oath.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Pakistani parliament approves proposals on US ties

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan's parliament on Thursday unanimously approved new guidelines for the country in its troubled relationship with the United States, a decision that could pave the way for the reopening of supply lines to NATO troops in neighboring Afghanistan. The guidelines allow for the blockade on U.S. and NATO supplies to be lifted, but also call for an immediate end to American drone strikes against militants on Pakistani soil. However, the lawmakers did not make a halt in the CIA-led missile attacks a prerequisite to reopening the supply lines, as some lawmakers had been demanding. The government and the army will use the recommendations as the basis for re-engaging with Washington.

Afghan leader raises prospect of early elections

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Afghanistan's president raised the prospect Thursday of holding presidential elections a year early to avoid a potentially deadly concurrence of a transition of power and a major drawdown of international forces in 2014. The suggestion could mean that President Hamid Karzai is looking for a graceful exit ahead of what many Afghans predict is looming civil war, but it also could provide some hope for a peaceful democratic transition to a nation worried about falling apart as NATO troops leave. Karzai—who has led Afghanistan for more than a decade—is constitutionally barred from running for a third term in the election currently scheduled for March 2014.

World

Syrian opposition vows protest to test shaky truce

BEIRUT (AP)—Syria's opposition called for widespread protests Friday to test the regime's commitment to an internationally brokered cease-fire that the U.N. chief described as so fragile it could collapse with a single gunshot.

Regime forces halted heavy shelling and other major attacks in line with the truce that began at dawn Thursday, though there were accusations of scattered violence by both sides. The government ignored demands to pull troops back to barracks, however, defying a key aspect of the plan, which aims to calm a year-old uprising that has killed 9,000 people and has pushed the country toward civil war.

"The onus is on the government of Syria to prove that their words will be matched by their deeds at this time," U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told reporters in Geneva. He said the world was watching with skeptical eyes.

"This cease-fire process is very fragile. It may be broken any time," Ban added, saying "another gunshot" could doom the truce.

The presence of tanks and troops could discourage any large gatherings, but the leader of the opposition Syrian National Council, Burhan Ghalioun, urged Syrians to demonstrate peacefully on Friday. "Tomorrow, like every Friday, the Syrian people are called to demonstrate even more and put the regime in front of its responsibilities—put the international community in front of its responsibilities."

A massive protest would be an important test of the cease-fire—whether President Bashar Assad will allow his forces to hold their fire and risk ushering in a weekslong sit-in or losing control over territory that government forces recently recovered from rebels.

So far, the military crackdown has prevented protesters from recreating the powerful displays of dissent seen in Egypt's Tahrir Square, where hundreds of thousands of people camped out in an extraordinary scene that drove longtime leader Hosni Mubarak from power.

If the truce holds, it would be the first time the regime has observed an internationally brokered cease-fire since Assad's regime launched a brutal crackdown 13 months ago on mass protests calling for his ouster.

"The test will come when we start to see protests across the length and breadth of the country," said Salman Shaikh, director of the Brookings Doha Center. "Is the Assad regime willing to accept that there will likely be hundreds of thousands of people on the streets in the next few days? And will they accept those protesters, if they are not breaking any laws, occupying certain spaces and towns and centers of towns, should that start to arise?"

An outbreak of violence at a chaotic rally could give the regime a pretext for ending the truce. And it would be difficult to determine the source of such an attack, given that Syria is largely sealed off from journalists and outside observers.

AP

This image made from amateur video released by the Shaam News Network and accessed Thursday, April 12, 2012, purports to show Syrians chanting slogans during a demonstration in Idlib, Syria.

Diplomats: Annan urges Syria troop withdrawal

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—International envoy Kofi Annan told the U.N. Security Council on Thursday he was "encouraged" at the start of a fragile cease-fire in Syria but said the government failed to keep its pledge to withdraw troops and heavy weapons from cities and towns.

U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice, the current council president, said Annan urged council members to demand that Syrian President Bashar Assad order his troops back to barracks.

She quoted Annan as saying in his video briefing to the council that "troops and heavy weapons remain in population centers."

Annan asked the Security Council to quickly authorize the deployment of an advance U.N. team to monitor the cease-fire, ahead of the deployment of a larger monitoring mission. South Africa's U.N. Ambassador Baso Sangqu said discussions on the text of a U.N. resolution authorizing the deployment would begin Thursday afternoon, and diplomats said it could be adopted as early as Friday.

The draft resolution, obtained by The Associated Press, would authorize an advance element of up to 30 unarmed military observers and demand that the government ensure their "full and unimpeded freedom of movement throughout Syria" and guarantee the mission's ability to interview any individual "freely or in private."

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon cautioned that a single gunshot could derail the fragile peace that started at 6 a.m. Damascus time. He urged both sides to refrain from provocation.

"It may be broken any time," Ban said. "If and when there is another gunshot, even a small gunshot may give both sides the pretext to engage in another fighting. This is a very worrisome."

Both Ban and Rice said the onus was on Syria to maintain peace.

"Its track record up until today has been dismal," Rice said. "We hope, but we clearly remain cautious in our assessment, that today becomes the start of a new way forward. But I think, frankly, we have a year's worth of evidence that leads us all to enormous skepticism."

The Assad regime has been using force to put down a civilian uprising for more than a year, and at least 9,000 people have died, according to U.N. estimates.

Syria's U.N. Ambassador Bashar Ja'afari reiterated to reporters that his government is committed to the success of Annan's mission and insisted that "we have already complied" with the requirement in his six-point peace plan to pull back troops and equipment.

But Rice countered that the Syrian ambassador was not in the Security Council chamber during Annan's closed-door briefing and did not hear the assessment of the joint U.N.-Arab League envoy. She quoted Annan as saying Syrian troops and equipment "must return to barracks as soon as possible."

Ja'afari said Syria's commitment to making the Annan plan a success must be matched by Arab, regional and international countries that are funding and arming the rebels, singling out Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United States.

In a statement issued before his videoconference briefing from Geneva, Annan said he was "encouraged by reports that the situation in Syria is relatively quiet and that the cessation of hostilities appears to be holding."

Rice said Annan told the council he had received unconfirmed reports of some violence in some cities after the cease-fire took effect, but said this was not unusual in the early hours of a cessation of hostilities "as parties were testing each other."

Cancer hasn't dimmed Hugo Chavez's electoral hopes

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—With less than six months left until Election Day, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has hardly hit the campaign trail. Instead, he has been consumed with his fight against cancer, repeatedly traveling to Cuba for treatment and publicly vowing to defeat his illness.

While cancer would end the presidential ambitions of many politicians, Chavez's struggle against the disease has in fact become his main rallying cry. Cancer could serve as a political asset if his health holds through the October vote, and that's the big "if" hanging over Venezuelan politics.

Last week, Chavez offered his starkest outlook yet as he wept while holding hands with his parents at a Mass and then pleaded to Jesus Christ to give him more life.

"Give me your crown, Christ," Chavez said in live footage broadcast nationwide. "Give me your cross, 100 crosses. I'll carry it, but give me life because there are still things left for me to do for these people and for this homeland. Don't take me away yet."

Chavez said later that he has faith in a "miracle" as he undergoes radiation therapy in Cuba following two surgeries that removed tumors from his pelvic area.

So far, what appears to be a serious life-or-death crisis hasn't dented his political support. To the contrary, one recent poll showed Chavez with a lead of 14 percentage points over rival Gov. Henrique Capriles. The poll by the firm Datanalisis had a margin of error of 2.5 percentage points.

Chavez has managed to hold on to support even while his main image has been that of an ailing president climbing or descending airplane stairs on his frequent flights to and from Cuba for treatment. On top of that, many Venezuelans are supporting him despite 25-percent inflation and one of the worst homicide rates in the world.

Information Minister Andres Izarra, one of Chavez's key aides, said on Monday that the president won't be out campaigning door-to-door like his rival because "he doesn't need to." Izarra also said Chavez's spirits are being lifted by his supporters.

"That love of the people, it's arisen like a balsam, like part of his medicine, like part of his treatment to completely recover," Izarra said during a televised speech.

On Friday, Chavez is expected to rally his supporters on the 10th anniversary of his return to power after a short-lived 2002 coup, and he has drawn a parallel between his cancer fight and his survival during that coup, when he was restored to the presidency amid large pro-Chavez street protests.

"At that time, the love of the people rescued Chavez from the edge of death," Izarra said. "This time the love of the people is also rescuing Chavez from a particular health situation, in which if it weren't for that love, I'm sure his ailments would perhaps be greater."

Eduardo Gamarra, a Latin American studies professor at Florida International University in Miami, said compassion elicited by Chavez's illness "has naturally played to his advantage in the electoral process."

"Not only President Chavez but certainly his supporters and certainly the people handling his political campaign are taking full advantage of it. And I think it would be crazy for them not to do so," Gamarra said.

Chavez's illness also presents a challenge for the opposition, Gamarra said, because it might appear "cold and callous" to attack a seriously ill leader.

WORLD BRIEFS

Military seizes Guinea-Bissau capital, may be coup

BISSAU, Guinea-Bissau (AP)—Explosions blasted through the capital of the small, coup-prone nation of Guinea-Bissau on Thursday as the military sealed off the city's downtown area and lobbed grenades at the prime minister's home, according to a diplomat and witnesses. The body representing nations in West Africa said it "formally condemns any attempt at a coup d'etat," according to Daniel Kablan Duncan, president of the body's Council on Mediation and Security. The violence comes just weeks before the country's presidential runoff vote, which Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Jr. was favored to win. There have been fears of a coup ever since Guinea-Bissau's president died of complications from diabetes in January, leaving an interim leader in charge of the chronically unstable country known for cocaine trafficking.

Video of kid 'violence' stirs storm in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP)—A video "mockumentary" that shows children as kidnappers, corrupt cops and drug traffickers sparked a fierce debate in violence-torn Mexico on Thursday, with some people calling it a needed wake-up call while others described it as political manipulation or even child abuse. Kids playing the role of businessmen, criminals and corrupt officials are seen robbing, paying bribes and shooting it out in a mock Mexico made up entirely of children, all to the deceptively laid-back tune of the 1970s ballad "Una Manana," or "One Morning." Produced by a foundation supported by private companies and universities and distributed over the Internet, the video ends with a direct message to the candidates in the Mexico's July 1 presidential race. A little girl faces the camera and says: "If this is the future that awaits me, I don't want it. Enough of working for your political parties instead of for us. Enough of cosmetic changes."

Young Style

Young Syrian activists put life on hold in revolt

By BEN HUBBARD
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRIPOLI, Lebanon (AP)—Last year, Khalid was a 19-year-old Syrian university student whose modest dreams were to land a job and earn enough to marry his girlfriend—not simple tasks given Syria's weak economy and his lack of connections to the ruling elite.

Since then, he's become a fugitive activist in the fight to topple President Bashar Assad. Khalid said he has been tortured by security forces and hasn't spoken to his loved ones in months for fear he'll endanger their lives.

Young people like Khalid have manned the front lines in the uprisings across the Arab world, organizing protests, documenting violence and taking up arms against government troops.

Analysts say youth frustration has proven to be a potent force in an area where some 60 percent of people are under 25—making it one of the world's youngest regions.

Many youth activists say they had plenty to protest, facing adulthood in societies where decades of autocratic rule left them with limited freedom and constricted economies. For Khalid and other young Syrians, the uprising is about more than just toppling a dictator. It's a fight for their generation's dreams.

"I can't think about my own life now," said Khalid, now 20, after sneaking across the Syrian border into Lebanon. "All I can think about is working to make the revolution succeed because it will have a huge effect on the lives of all youth."

The young have been key players in Syria's uprising since its start in March 2011, when security forces arrested a group of teenagers who scrawled anti-regime graffiti on a wall in the southern city of Daraa, generating huge protests.

Assad's security forces violently cracked down, deploying tanks, snipers and thugs to quash the spreading dissent. Later, many civilians took up arms to defend their communities and attack security forces. The U.N. says more than 9,000 people have been killed, including at least 500 children. Hundreds more children have been injured, detained or abused.

As the death toll mounts, young activists acknowledge some naivete in their decision to challenge one of the region's most brutal police states. Their elders often tried to dissuade them, recalling how Assad's father and predecessor, Hafez, killed between 10,000 and 25,000 people while crushing a 1982 rebellion in the city of Hama.

"Many of them were scared. They saw what the regime can do and told us, 'We were there in 1982. You weren't.'" said Mustafa, 24, who fled the coastal city of Banias to Lebanon last year. Like Khalid, he asked only that his first name be used for fear of endangering relatives inside Syria.

Still, many have decided that a chance at better lives was worth dropping their studies, jobs and marriage plans.

Before the uprising, Khalid studied engineering at a university in the central city of Homs, even though he was interested in computers and wasn't sure he'd ever get a job. He dreamed of going to school abroad, but government scholarships went to students in the ruling Baath Party.

He never thought about politics, but began paying close attention when uprisings toppled dictators in Tunisia and Egypt last year. In March, security forces stopped an anti-regime demonstration on campus, then forced students to attend a pro-Assad rally.

In April, security forces killed protesters in his neighborhood, Baba Amr, then posted troops to deter future gatherings.

"That was the first time I got mad and decided I was against the regime," Khalid said.

Anger grew in the neighborhood as the regime crushed more protests and raided homes to arrest activists, sometimes detaining their parents, he said.

Khalid started a Facebook page to commemorate those killed while working with other activists to film protests to post online.

In October, security forces stopped him at a checkpoint and found a photo on his cellphone of a government sniper, Khalid said. At the police station, he was beaten with a mop handle until his back was numb, then locked with six others in a cell so small that only three people could sit down at a time, he added.

For 20 days, he was regularly beaten during interrogations and suspended by plastic strips around his wrists, he said. He finally escaped with the help of a sympathetic security officer.

"After that, I knew I'd never shut up," he said. "I wanted to do the impossible to make the revolution succeed."

But first, he broke up with his girlfriend, worrying that their relationship would endanger her. She cried when he told her.

"I had to do it for her safety," he said. "I have set out on a martyr mission. As soon as you say, 'I'm an activist,' you know you could die."

At that time, Baba Amr was becoming a national symbol of the uprising. Army defectors has flocked to the area, making it harder for troops to come in, protests grew and the youth organized into media, medical and even trash pickup committees.

That defiance drew the regime's wrath, and in early February troops surrounded Baba Amr and shelled it daily. Khalid and the media team kept working, filming and uploading videos and communicating with journalists and other activists via Skype.

Despite the violence, there was youthful mischief. When an explosion near their makeshift media center silenced a rooster often heard in their videos, they commemorated him with his own Facebook page.

On Feb. 22, government rockets hit the media center, killing a number of activists and foreign journalists Marie Colvin and Remi Ochlik, who had sneaked into Syria. Government troops captured the area on March 1, after armed rebels and activists pulled out.

Khalid says he's seen the bodies of some of his relatives in activist videos from the neighborhood and hasn't spoken to his parents in two months.

None of the activists' claims could be independently verified. The Syrian government bars most media from operating inside the country.

Another Baba Amr activist who also fled to Lebanon said he passed up a chance to study medicine in Germany so he could work to topple Assad.

"I reached a point where I realized that Syria could have a good future," he said, declining to give his name for fear of reprisals against his relatives. "I used to want to go to a developed country, but someday, after Assad falls, Syria will be like that. But we'll build it ourselves."

While international condemnation of Assad has mounted, diplomacy has failed to stop the violence and many activists acknowledge that the conflict is unlikely to end soon.

Most are still driven by the hope of better lives in Syria.

"I want to go back and study, get a job in a company," said Mustafa, the activist from Banias, who was a barber before the uprising and now helps Syrian refugees settle in Lebanon.

He, too, put marriage plans on hold because of the uprising, but is still in touch with his girlfriend whom he hopes to marry someday.

"Perhaps the day after the regime falls," he said, laughing.

AP

In this March 21, 2012, file photo, anti-Syrian regime activists cover their faces with scarves in the colors of the Syrian revolution flag as they prepare an Arabic banner that reads, "how would a mother be happy in the Eid (mother's day) while in each home we have a martyr," to be held in a protest in Damascus, Syria.

AP

Syrian youth stand in a building damaged by tank shells in a neighborhood of Damascus, Syria, after a raid by Syrian troops killed several rebels and civilians Thursday, April 5, 2012.

Junior Whirl

by Hal Kaufman

BIRD WATCH! See how quickly you can find the names of six birds (listed below) in the diagram at right by the simple method of using one letter from each horizontal row.

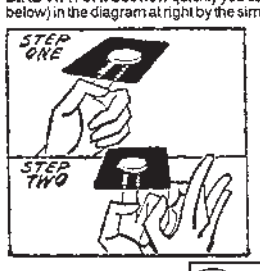
These are the six birds: Pigeon, canary, magpie, falcon, parrot, plover.

Each bird's name has six letters, natch. Names may begin in any row. Letters may be used only once per row per bird. Time limit: 2 min. It is a rather easy exercise.

P	F	Y			
R	L	I			
G	V	A			
C	T	E			
B	O	A			
N	R	M			

WORD PLAY! Insert five three-letter names of animals to complete these seven-letter words: 1. —poke. 2. —wash. 3. —walk. 4. —hole. 5. —gone.

1. Cow. 2. Hog. 3. Cat. 4. Fox. 5. Dog.



FLICK AND PLOP COIN TRICK

PRACTICE this trick so that you can perform it for friends.

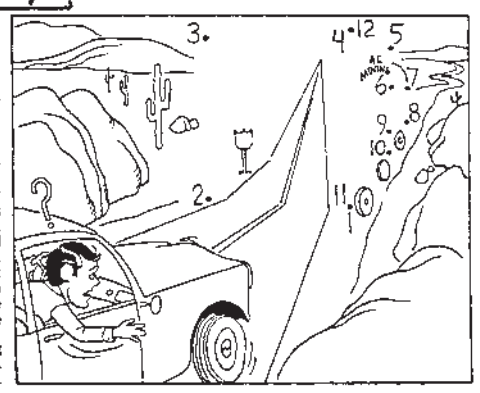
Place a playing card atop an extended index finger. Place a small coin atop the card.

Now, using your other index finger, flick the card out from under the coin, and have it (the coin) land on your finger. Give it a try.

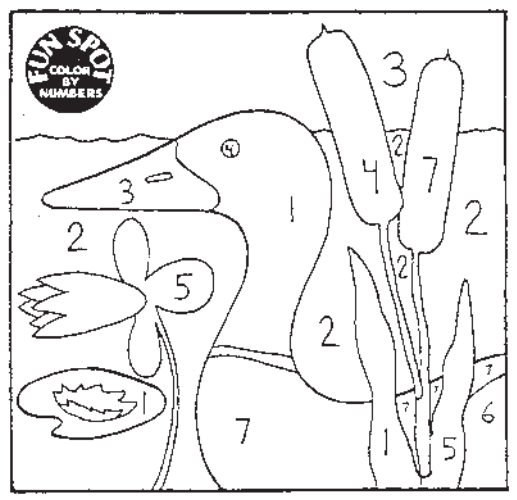
Two helpful suggestions: 1. Position the coin atop the card directly over the tip of the finger. 2. Flick the card with a sharp blow.

Any reasonably sized coin will do, as will a business card instead of a playing card.

It may take patience.



ROAD QUIRK! Hey, what's with the road ahead — some kind of an obstacle illusion? Insert lines from dot to dot.



DUCK STOP! Don't be shy, Mr. Mallard, come out from behind those cattails. Color-by-number code: 1—Dk. green. 2—Lt. blue. 3—Yellow. 4—Lt. brown. 5—Lt. green. 6—Gray. 7—Dk. brown.

SPELLBINDER

SCORE 10 points for using all the letters in the word below to form two complete words:

ESOTERIC

THEN score 2 points each for all words of four letters or more found among the letters.

Try to score at least 50 points.

Possible twosome: Cite, rose.

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Strange BUT TRUE

by Samantha Weaver

■ It was beloved American humorist Will Rogers who made the following sage observation: "You can't say civilization don't advance, for in every war they kill you a new way."

■ Elkhart, Ind., has the dubious distinction of being the RV capital of the world.

■ According to a survey by the magazine Vegetarian Times, if you're a vegetarian, you have 3 percent of the U.S. population for company. Only half of 1 percent of Americans are vegans, consuming no animal products at all, while 10 percent say they follow a "vegetarian-inclined" diet.

■ The Hawaiian alphabet has only 12 letters.

■ In 1743 one Dr. John Cohausen wrote a book called "Hermippus Redivivus," in which he described how anyone could live to the ripe old age of 115—a particularly impressive feat in the 18th century. His recipe for a long life involved burning gum olibani, styrae, myrrh and a variety of herbs, then inhaling the fumes, while at the same time "imbibing the exhalations of the nearest little girl."

■ According to the law in the town of Chester, England, if you catch a Welshman within the city walls after the sun has gone down, you may shoot him with a longbow.

■ Those who study such things say that the asteroids are so rich in minerals that one cubic kilometer of one of these heavenly bodies would provide the materials to make enough steel to supply the world's industry for more than a decade, with more than a century's worth of nickel, to boot.

■ The shortest complete sentence in the English language is "Go."

■ If you're like half of all Americans, you live within 50 miles of your childhood home.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "If you live to the age of a hundred, you've got it made, because very few people die past the age of a hundred."—George Burns

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MAGIC MAZE ● A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

A	P	M	J	G	D	A	X	B	W	V	S	Q	N	K
I	F	D	A	M	S	T	E	R	D	A	M	I	L	A
X	V	T	Q	T	O	M	J	U	D	H	S	F	C	A
Y	O	Y	K	O	T	W	U	S	A	R	P	R	N	L
J	H	F	D	B	E	U	Z	S	D	X	V	T	A	R
Q	O	M	K	I	M	L	C	E	H	S	H	N	F	W
D	B	Z	V	Y	O	W	I	L	G	V	I	T	R	I
Q	O	N	L	E	R	K	I	S	A	L	H	R	H	F
D	C	A	Z	N	I	L	R	E	B	C	X	L	A	W
V	U	S	R	Q	A	K	O	U	N	O	E	M	K	P
J	I	H	F	E	C	D	D	N	O	D	N	O	L	B

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Amsterdam	Cairo	Kiev	Rome
Baghdad	Calcutta	Lisbon	Tokyo
Berlin	Delhi	London	Warsaw
Brussels	Dublin	Paris	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	×		−		23
÷		+		−	
	+		+		15
×		×		×	
	−		×		25
7		10		15	

1 2 4 5 6 7 8 8 9

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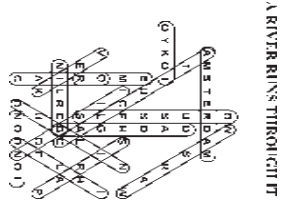
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

8	×	4	+	1	10
23	−	9	+	6	15
×		×		×	
25	−	5	×	2	15
7	÷	3	−	7	7

Getting the poop on poop-eating

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I recently read an article that said to use Super B complex to stop stool eating in dogs. Have you heard of this? My veterinarian has not. If so, what is the dosage? The article I read referred to golden retrievers, but my dogs weigh 35 to 45 pounds. I don't want to overdose them. —Dianne E., via email

DEAR DIANNE: Poop-eating, known scientifically as copraphagia, is a troublesome habit in which dogs will sniff and eat their own stools or those of other animals. As you can imagine, this behavior is not only disgusting but potentially unhealthy. And it sure makes you not want to kiss your dog.

Copraphagia is such a big problem that there are entire websites devoted to it. Vernon Lee's dogpoopdiet.com is one such site. It's clearly laid out and offers plenty of information both on possible causes of the behavior—from health issues to attention-seeking—and ways to deter it.

As far as giving your dog a B complex supplement, it appears to address the possibility that a dog is not getting enough of certain nutrients, including vitamin B, which is leading to his behavior. B vitamins are found naturally in foods like liver, kidney, heart, eggs and kelp, and in ingredients like yeast and wheat germ. Pet stores and health-food stores both sell B complex supplements for both humans and dogs.

The vitamin supplement is water-soluble and tends to break down quickly when exposed to air or water, so according to some advocates, an overdose is unlikely. However, you should check dosage rates for your dogs through their vet, or a holistic practitioner, or by searching on the Internet or visiting manufacturers websites for recommended amounts.

■ ■ ■

Send your questions or pet care tips to ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. For more pet care-related advice and information, visit www.pawscorner.com.

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Make ABC puppets with personality

Every nook and cranny of your home can be a stage when your kids play with puppets. Stirring up imaginations can be as easy as putting your hands in socks or even drawing a face on a banana.

Here's a way to tell a tale while practicing the ABC's. Make a special collection of puppets with kids that show off 26 endearing personalities, as inspired by the ABCs. Start with one or two letters, and add to your collection every week. Here's how:

1. Make a basic hand-puppet pattern by placing an adult hand (with thumb and pinkie extended to the sides and three middle fingers together) on a sheet of paper. Draw around the hand, allowing extra space on all sides. The pattern should be about 12 inches long and 8 inches wide at the widest point. Adjust the sketch to make it even, and cut out along the lines.

2. Place the pattern on two pieces of lightweight felt, then pin and cut out. Use a hole punch to punch holes around the cut-out felt pieces 1/2 inch in from the edge (except the bottom edge) and about 1/2 inch between each hole. It is easier to punch the holes one layer of felt at a time. Be sure that holes match up when placing the pieces together.

3. Match the felt pieces, and weave cording or a long shoelace in and out of the holes, beginning and ending at the bottom corners of the puppet shape. Knot each end. Your child's hand should fit in the bottom opening with the three middle fingers in the wide body and the thumb and pinkie to the sides.

4. Use felt scraps to cut a shape of an alphabet letter. Glue the letter onto the puppet. Add details such as buttons, wiggly eyes, yarn, pipe cleaners, fabric scraps, trinkets, etc., to create the puppet's features and personality. The items should represent words that start with the same alphabet letter. Here are some ideas:

"A" is for Alligator, wearing antlers, carrying an apple with an ant crawling on top;

"B" is for Baby Bunny with a blue bow and buttons;

"H" is for Hippo with a heart and a hanky;

"L" is for Lazy Lion with leaves and a lollipop;

"P" is for Purple, Polka-dot Pig with a peace sign, pearl and pompom;

"T" is for Turkey with a turquoise tutu and two teeth;

"W" is for Woolly Walrus with a wiry wig;

"Z" is for Zany Zebra with a zero and a zigzag.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning series "Donna's Day" is airing on public television nationwide. To find more of her creative family recipes and activities, visit www.donnasday.com and link to the NEW Donna's Day Facebook fan page. Her latest book is "Donna Erickson's Fabulous Funstuff for Families."

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Good Housekeeping

Couple turns swimming spot into rainwater garden

By SUSAN CARPENTER
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Dina and Irl Cramer were looking at the little-used pool behind their Manhattan Beach, Calif., house when they realized: "It would be really nice to have a garden," Dina said.

But rather than simply jackhammer out the pool or bulldoze it full of dirt, the Cramers turned the pit into a case study for how Southern Californians can capture winter rains for use watering the garden. The edges of the pool were ground down, and the rest of the concrete form was retrofitted with a rainwater storage system.

Now, in place of a concrete basin filled with chlorinated water, the Cramers have a stream, a small waterfall and about 100 lush plants—all fed with rain harvested from the roof and stored in recycled-plastic tanks underground.

The water savings come not only from using less tap water to irrigate the garden but also from not having the pool. About 24,000 gallons of water can evaporate in a big pool every year, according to Mike Garcia, a self-described pond geek and founder of EnviroscapeLA, the Redondo Beach, Calif., firm that designed the catchment system.

"The rainwater harvesting system is the landscape world meets the pond world," said Garcia, who likened the design to "a big, pondless waterfall on steroids."

Garcia used a Clean Rain system manufactured by Atlantic Water Gardens that flushes the first minutes of a rainfall—often laden with dirt and roof debris—to the sewer. Then gravity feeds the subsequent "clean" rain into the Eco Rain tanks installed where the pool used to be. The tanks can store 6,000 gallons, compared with the 50 to 70 gallons that a typical rain barrel can hold. Electric pumps send water from the Cramers' storage tanks to a recycled-plastic Rain Bird drip irrigation system that feeds the plants as well as to the waterfall and stream.

The Cramers said they spent five figures on the pool conversion, which broke ground in October. The system has been operational since late January, so the Cramers don't yet know exactly how much energy is being used to pump and irrigate, or how much tap water they're saving. But Garcia estimated that the waterfall costs less than 10 cents an hour to operate, the lighting 16 cents. The system is expected to irrigate the garden with rainwater 10 months out of the year. If the rainwater runs out, the system switches to tap.

LOS ANGELES TIMES
Dina and Irl Cramer decided to turn their rarely-used backyard pool into a garden space in Manhattan Beach, California.

The pumps are hidden in a landscape by Elena Fortunato of Garden Sanctuaries by Design in Palos Verdes Estates, Calif. The underground "vaults" housing the equipment are covered with rigid plastic and layered with mulch. The master sprinkler valves and brain for the system are tucked away behind a hedge of variegated shell ginger.

Fortunato kept the mature palm, ficus, loquat and schefflera trees ringing a backyard that, until recently, was mostly concrete. She also used some of the Cramers' existing ferns, complemented with day lilies, jasmine and other fragrant and lush plants. A fire pit completes the new garden.

"It's crazy beautiful at night," said Irl, who can turn the water feature and landscape lighting on and off with a remote control he keeps in the master bedroom, overlooking the backyard.

"It's great during the day," he said, "and at night it's not over."

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Mushroom and Snap Pea Salad

The mushrooms in this spring salad can be marinated up to 4 hours ahead of assembly. The easy homemade dressing and marinade combines shallots, thyme, bay leaf and sherry vinegar.

- 2 boxes (10 ounces each) sliced mushrooms
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 4 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 pound sugar snap peas
- 1 large (8 ounces) bunch frisee, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1/4 cup packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped
- 2 tablespoons (pignoli) pine nuts, toasted

1. Place mushrooms in large bowl. In 2-quart saucepan, combine shallots, thyme, bay leaf and 1/3 cup oil. Heat on medium 2 to 3 minutes or until shallots are just tender. Pour over mushrooms and immediately stir until well-mixed. Stir in 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper. Cover and let stand at room temperature 1 hour, or refrigerate up to 4 hours.

2. Heat covered 4-quart saucepan of water to boiling on high. Meanwhile, remove and discard strings from snap peas. Add snap peas and 1/2 teaspoon salt to boiling water. Cook, uncovered, 2 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and immediately rinse with cold water until cool; drain again.

3. In large bowl, toss frisee, parsley and snap peas with remaining 2 tablespoons vinegar and 1 tablespoon oil. Divide among salad plates. Remove and discard thyme and bay leaf from mushrooms; divide mushrooms and sherry dressing among fris€e plates. Sprinkle with toasted pine nuts to serve. Serves 8.

Each serving: About 160 calories, 12g total fat (2g saturated), 0mg cholesterol, 120mg sodium, 10g carbohydrate, 4g dietary fiber, 5g protein. For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipefinder/.

Cleaning windows inside and out

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA
KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

Q: I'm pretty regular about cleaning my home's windows on the inside, but as a new homeowner I've never cleaned the outside of the windows, and they're getting pretty grungy. The first floor shouldn't be a problem, but what about the upstairs windows? Also, is there a faster way to clean than with paper towels and spray cleaner? -- Brad in Knoxville, Tenn.

A: "Fast" depends on just how grungy the outside of the windows are, but I can get you to "effective and efficient" which will make the task of cleaning windows easier.

On a side note, spring and fall are great times to clean the outside windows, if you don't do them more frequently. These are typically the seasons when screens are replaced with storm windows and vice versa, and while dual screen-storm windows are more common, it's still a good guideline to follow.

First, inspect all your home's windows to make sure they're undamaged, including storm windows and screens. Next, remove screens or storm windows and place them on a clean, sunny spot of the driveway or walkway to be cleaned.

Take a look at the home's windows from the inside. Newer double-hung windows can be unhooked and either lifted out of the frame or swung inward to access the outside of the glass. Older windows are sometimes held in the frame by a thin strip of wood, which should be carefully removed. Then the bottom sash can be lifted out of the frame. Being able to swing out or remove the bottom sash makes cleaning the outside of upstairs windows easier and much safer than climbing a ladder to reach them.

To clean windows, brush away loose dust and debris first. Then fill a bucket with warm water and mild detergent. Place a waterproof liner (like a tarp or sheet of plastic) underneath the window to protect the floor and walls. Wear rubber gloves to keep your hands clean and less pruney. Dunk a clean sponge in the soapy water and wash the windowpanes, repeating as necessary to remove built-up dirt. Once the window is clean, grab a lint-free cloth, a chamois or for a really old-school way to dry a window, some newspaper. Dry the glass completely; for your final pass, wipe back and forth, then straight up and down, to minimize streaks.

I usually start cleaning the outside of windows first. Yes, it grunges up your water and sponge faster, but it also gets the hard work out of the way first. I can clean the sponge and refill the bucket for the inside of the windows.

Finally, clean the screens and storm windows that were set aside, brushing away cobwebs and loose dirt before using soap and water. Close up all of the windows and reset either the screens or storm windows, ready for the next season.

home tip

Avoid drying windows in direct sunlight, as the glass is more likely to streak.

Send your questions or tips to ask@thisisahammer.com, or write This Is a Hammer, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Life & Style

Skittles joins food brands at center of tragedy

NEW YORK (AP)—It could've been Starbursts, Twizzlers or Sour Patch Kids. But when Trayvon Martin was fatally shot, he happened to be carrying a bag of Skittles.

The 17-year-old's death at the hands of a neighborhood watchman in February ignited nationwide protests and heated debate about racial profiling and "Stand Your Ground" laws.

For Mars Inc., the privately held company that owns Skittles, the tragedy presents another, more surreal dimension. Protestors carried bags of the chewy fruit-flavored candy while marching for the arrest of shooter George Zimmerman. Mourners pinned the bright red wrappers to their hooded sweatshirts at memorial services.

On eBay, vendors sell $10 T-shirts with the words "Justice for Trayvon Martin" printed over a cartoon-like rainbow of pouring Skittles.

Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company—the unit of Mars that owns Skittles—issued only a brief statement offering condolences to Martin's friends and family, adding that it would be inappropriate to comment further "as we would never wish for our actions to be perceived as an attempt of commercial gain."

Skittles isn't the first popular food brand to find itself at the center of a major controversy. The terms "the Twinkie defense" and "don't drink the Kool-Aid" became part of the vernacular decades ago in the wake of tragic events. More recently, Doritos made headlines when it was reported that the corn chips were Saddam Hussein's favorite snack.

The cases show how millions of advertising and marketing dollars can be rendered powerless when a company's product is swept into a big news story. Hostess Brands Inc., which owns Twinkies, says it does not have any archival information on how it handled the popularization of the term "the Twinkie defense." The phrase was used derisively by the media during the trial of Dan White, who fatally shot San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and city supervisor Harvey Milk in 1978. White's lawyers cited his poor eating habits as a sign of his depressed state.

As for "don't drink the Kool-Aid," younger generations may not realize the phrase has its origins in the 1978 mass suicide in Jonestown, Guyana, where Reverend Jim Jones led more than 900 members of the Peoples Temple to drink a grape flavored drink laced with cyanide.

The powdered mix used to make the concoction was actually the lesser known Flavor Aid. Even so, executives at Kraft Foods Inc., which owns Kool-Aid, decided to let the matter go, rather than set the record straight.

"It would be like spitting into the wind at this point—it's just part of the national lexicon," says Bridget MacConnell, a Kraft spokeswoman. "We all try to protect the value of our brands. But this one just kind of got away from us. I don't think there was any way to fight it."

MacConnell added that Kool-Aid remains a popular drink and that the Jonestown tragedy has not overshadowed the brand.

AP

In this Wednesday, March, 28, 2012, photo, a child raises a bag of Skittles candy during a march to call for justice for slain teenager Trayvon Martin, in Texarkana, Ark.

In 2005, Doritos became fodder for late night comedians when it was reported that Saddam Hussein loved the chips. A U.S. military guard quoted in a GQ magazine story said the deposed Iraqi dictator originally obsessed over Cheetos and got "grumpy" whenever guards ran out of the finger-staining treats. Saddam forgot about Cheetos only after guards gave him Doritos as a substitute one day.

"He'd eat a family size bag of Doritos in 10 minutes," the guard said.

A spokesman for PepsiCo Inc., which owns Frito-Lay, says the matter was a "non-issue" for the company.

Although it didn't get as much attention, the article also noted Saddam preferred Raisin Bran Crunch for breakfast, telling a guard, "No Froot Loops."

As difficult as it may be for companies to weather controversy, the uncomfortable attention doesn't spell the end of a product. Hostess and Kraft say they don't have information on whether the "Twinkie" and "Kool-Aid" catch-phrases had an impact on sales. But both brands clearly survived.

Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company declined to say whether the Martin case has had an impact on Skittles sales. Even so, it is one of the most popular candies in the U.S. Sales grew 7 percent over the past year to $213.8 million, according to SymphonyIRI, a Chicago-based market research firm that tracks sales at supermarkets, drug stores and mass merchandise outlets, excluding Walmart.

The best approach for companies is to maintain a low profile, says Katherine Sredl, an assistant professor of marketing at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business. That's particularly true in the Martin case, where any action by Mars could be interpreted as insincere or opportunistic.

Fate can swing in the other direction too, of course. Companies can become the beneficiaries of unexpected positive press, usually when celebrities are spotted consuming their products without being paid for an endorsement.

Last winter, Skittles basked in exactly that type of exposure when NFL star Marshawn Lynch was shown scarfing down a bag of the candy on the sideline after a touchdown. Lynch, a running back for the Seattle Seahawks, explained it was a tradition he started with his mother in high school. Fans started throwing Skittles at Seahawks games.

In that scenario, Mars was quick to step forward and capitalize on the opportunity. The McLean, Va.-based company gave Lynch a free two-year supply as well as a custom-made Skittles dispenser for his locker.

Despite becoming ensnared in the Martin case a few months later, Mars may ultimately benefit from the tragedy, says Sredl, the marketing professor. The many people who see Martin as an innocent victim might buy the candy in solidarity or an act of protest, she says.

Sredl believes the Martin case could help to reinforce the buoyant image Skittles convey.

"Skittles have always symbolized youth and innocence. They're so brightly colored and almost pure sugar," Sredl says.

That's why the candy became such a vivid detail in the Martin case. In the public imagination, it underscored that the teenager was "just a kid walking down the street eating Skittles," Sredl says.

Perhaps more importantly, Skittles has become a part of the public discourse, she says. And that's always good for a company.

Years later, Versailles models still turning heads

NEW YORK (AP)—They didn't really know it at the time, but the black models who walked in the Versailles fashion face-off in France in 1973 carved a path on the catwalk for generations to come.

Lately, though, there has been some erosion—not just for black models, but for models overall, says Bethann Hardison, one of those trailblazers who now spends most of her time on the other side of the business as a casting director, agent and adviser.

"The 'fashion model' has become extinct. They are no longer muses, they are girls with clothes on them," says Hardison. "In the early and mid-'90s, things started to change and diversity got lost."

She's talking about skin color, body types, hairstyles—anything that shows personality, she explains. "Now designers, they don't want models to be so recognizable. They are picking girls you wouldn't notice. They want the girls to walk front to back, and tell them, `Don't smile, don't swing your hips, don't do anything but walk.'"

Back at Versailles, when a group of upstart American-based designers, including Halston, Anne Klein and Bill Blass, unexpectedly beat French couturiers in a fashion competition that really put the U.S. sportswear industry on the map, Hardison says she was expected to work the crowd. "Halston said, 'Bethann, we're counting on you.' At rehearsal, I couldn't bring it, I was so nervous, but in the show, when the moment came, fear made me go down there and do it for the team, and I did it."

There were almost a dozen black models on the runway, which was unheard of at the time. It showed the Americans as modern, especially compared with the more old-school, rarified styles of Pierre Cardin, Yves Saint Laurent and Hubert de Givenchy.

Many of the models continued with steady catwalk work through the 1970s and `80s, perfecting unique looks that designers would use as inspiration.

Hardison says designers weren't using them to make a social statement; they were trying to reflect the new global audience they were speaking to. Some designers and brands continue to do that today, she observes, but too many are caught up in having that blank canvas they think won't distract from their clothes.

Hardison recently took a turn in front of the cameras again, joining Alva Chinn and Pat Cleveland, among others, in a spread celebrating that almost 40-year-old fashion show in the May issue of O, The Oprah Magazine. She says it was great fun to do—remember, she's from the generation that likes hamming it up—but, more important, she hopes it was a life lesson in confidence for the up-and-coming, younger black models, including Joan Smalls and Kinee Diouf, who shared the pages with them.

AP

In this undated image taken by Lorenzo Agius for "O, The Oprah Magazine," models who walked in the Versailles fashion face-off in France in 1973, from left, Pat Cleveland, Alva Chinn, Jaunel McKenzie, Bethann Hardison, Kinee Diouf, and Shelby Coleman are shown during a photo shoot for the May issue of "O, The Oprah Magazine."

The genesis of the story and photo shoot was a chance request by The Huffington Post for O editor-at-large Gayle King to present the Versailles models with one of its Game Changer awards last fall. That was a few months after the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art honored them and just before ABC News did a segment. A book and documentary are also in the works, says Hardison. All the attention is nice, if unexpected so many years later, she adds.

"I guess we thought of it as a big `another day' in fashion (in 1973), but it was also just another day. We didn't know it was iconic or historic, but nothing ever is until after it's done. You need the context at some given point in time, and people learn about something and say, `Wow.'"

The Versailles models understood how to use their own unique looks and personalities to sell clothes, says Adam Glassman, O's creative director. These women were perfect for the magazine's age issue, he adds, because they are aging beautifully and with spunk.

"Had we not had these legends, I don't know where we'd be today in American fashion," he says.

Madonna: Happy Joyce Banda is Malawi's president

NEW YORK (AP)—Madonna says she's happy that Malawi's former vice president is now leading the country.

Joy Banda became president Saturday and is the country's first woman leader. Former president Bingu wa Mutharika died of a heart attack on April 5.

Madonna adopted two Malawian children and started the charity, Raising Malawi, in 2006. It assists orphanages and other aid programs in the country.

The singer called Banda "amazing" and said she interviewed the 62-year-old for her 2008 documentary, "I Am Because We Are," about Malawian orphans who lost family members to HIV/AIDS.

"She was really into girls being educated in Africa, which is a good thing," Madonna said in an interview Thursday night. "So, I'm glad."

The pop star made the comments at Macy's in New York for the launch of her fragrance, Truth or Dare. She said she's "been trying to develop a fragrance for probably the last 15 years."

Singer Madonna arrives at Macy's Herald Square to launch her new fragrance "Truth or Dare By Madonna" on Thursday, April 12, 2012 in New York.

AP

"It's never worked out with various companies and different people and trying different fragrances," she said. "They never turned out the way I wanted them to smell."

But Madonna says that was partially due to her expensive taste.

"It's the mass producing part that always gets tricky, because for some reason the fragrances that I like tend to be really expensive," the singer said. "One time I created a smell and I was told the amber, it was like a million dollars to ship from India or something. ...And then they tried to make (a) synthetic (version). This happens a lot and it never smells as good as you want it to smell. That's happened a couple times. Finally I got a smell I like that I can mass produce. Yay!"

Truth or Dare ranges in price from $39 to $68.

Guy Pearce used to be locked out of playing tough guys, but no more

By RICK BENTLEY
THE FRESNO BEE (FRESNO, CALIF.)

LOS ANGELES—Guy Pearce doesn't like to repeat himself.

The English-born Australian actor has played a drag queen in "The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert," a gritty detective in "L.A. Confidential," a man who can't hold on to new memories in "Memento," a time traveler in "The Time Machine" and King Edward VIII in "The King's Speech." Despite all the acting diversity, Pearce's never had the opportunity to play a wise-cracking, jaw-breaking, convict-killing, disgraced cop until now. That's the role he portrays in the new sci-fi thriller 'Lockout."

And that character is why he agreed to star in the film.

"I was attracted to the irreverence of the character," Pearce says. "At the heart of this story is this typical action hero but he doesn't give a (expletive). I liked that take on him. Plus, I am not normally asked to do this kind of role.

"It was a challenge because of trying to succeed at getting that balance right of humor but maintaining a sense of reality as much as one can in a futuristic science fiction action movie."

There's no certain type of film Pearce favors over another. For him, it's more about the people he gets to work with in front of and behind the camera. As long as the cast and crew are strong, the experience of making a drama, action movie or romantic comedy—the one type of movie he doesn't get offered a lot—tends to be enjoyable.

Of working in all the other genres, Pearce says: "When you read something, and you feel inspired by what you read, and then you have what you want to bring to it, if that is honored and you can discuss all that stuff, then it is a fantastic experience."

LOS ANGELES TIMES/MCT

Guy Pearce with his award at the 63rd Annual Primetime Emmy Awards on Sunday, September 18, 2011, at Nokia Theatre, L.A. Live, in Los Angeles, California.

He was offered the part of the cantankerous cop while shooting the period miniseries "Mildred Pierce," a role that won him an Emmy. The only concern by the directors—James Mather and Stephen St. Leger—was that Pearce seemed a little thin to play the tough guy.

That meant Pearce had to go to the gym to add a little more bulk to his physique. Pearce has never had any problem adding or losing muscle for a role, as long as it helps make the story better. The toughest part was that the film shot in Serbia and the bodybuilders around him were always trying to get Pearce to go clubbing after their workout.

"I think they wanted me to help them pick up chicks," Pearce says. "I told them I was married and kind of busy so I didn't go."

Proms aren't typical red carpets for Disney stars

NEW YORK (AP)—Debby Ryan and Laura Marano get dressed up more than average teenagers: As Disney Channel starlets, they've done their fair share of red carpets. But, they say, there's still something special—and different—about picking a dress for a school dance and, especially, the prom.

"On the red carpet, I'm more worried about looking like I'm not going to the prom. I might be potentially more casual. For a school dance, I can go for it, and for the prom, I will pretend I'm a princess," says Marano, star of "Austin & Ally."

When the time comes, the 16-year-old suspects there'll be another factor in her decision: the boys at school. "At the prom, you are more about boys thinking you're cute. On the red carpet, you have to please everyone because there are a lot more people looking at those pictures. But," she adds, "from the dances, you will still have photos but you don't have to show everyone."

Ryan and Marano came armed with several prom-worthy dresses to The Associated Press' headquarters in Manhattan to talk about their style and how they are growing into the roles of fashionistas alongside their acting gigs. Even for the early-morning interview they came dressed to the nines with Ryan in a floral blouse with contrasting floral skirt, black tights and super-high heels and Marano wearing a coordinated patchwork of different textures and colors paired with peep-toe booties.

At a prom, however, they might be twins since, when it was time to peruse the dance dresses, they both went for the blousoned white one with a beaded metallic skirt. Marano also loves the cobalt color of a one-shoulder, full-length column gown, while Ryan sees glamour potential in a platinum dress covered in pleats.

Upon further consideration, Ryan picked up a short pink strapless dress with a fitted bodice. She likes the color but wonders if the tiered skirt is "a little too tutu?"

"I think I'd have to add a little black tulle to the bottom to make it a little more rock `n' roll," says Ryan, 18, who stars on the series "Jessie," was on "The Suite Life on Deck" and had a prom scene in the TV movie "Radio Rebel." She also attended her own hometown prom in Keller, Texas, so, she says, she's a veteran of golf ball-sized sequins, a rainbow of colors and the whole boots-with-ballgown look.

"It's all about creating a moment to remember," Ryan says, adding that the prom for many girls is a turning point between childhood and being an adult—it's a chance to make a statement both about who you've been and who you want to be. A red carpet is more businesslike, she describes, with a chorus of people giving advice and approvals on an outfit, she explains, while a prom is more personal.

She keeps her prom photo—she's in a "Charlie's Angels" pose with her friends wearing a blush-colored dress with flowers at the neckline—on her bookshelf with her other prized possessions, including her collections of cameras and vinyl records.

Girl chasing limelight should keep her feet on the ground

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: I am a 16-year-old girl and I want to become famous. My mom says that's not a real job. I was in magazines when I was little, but now that I'm older, I want to be a singer or actress. What should I do?

HEADING FOR FAME IN OHIO

DEAR HEADING: Listen to your mother. Fame, if one can achieve it, is usually accomplished after years of planning and hard work. If there is community theater in your area, volunteer and become involved. Plan to study music, drama and speech—as well as another subject so you can support yourself if it takes awhile for you to become famous. (This is called "Plan B.")

There's an old saying: "Luck" happens at the intersection of opportunity and preparation. The trick is to be there at the right time.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My father passed away four years ago. Right after his funeral I found a bottle of Viagra hidden in the trunk of his car. My sister and I agreed that we should keep it to ourselves and not tell my mother, but Mom and I are extremely close and I feel guilty keeping this secret.

My father had multiple affairs while he was married to Mom, so it wouldn't surprise me if he was cheating on her. Because of conversations that I have had with her, I am 100 percent sure she didn't know he was using Viagra. My mother remarried two years ago. Does she have the right to know, or should my sister and I take it to our graves?

TWO SISTERS IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SISTERS: Your father's time on earth is over. Your mother is happily (I hope) remarried and has gone on with her life. I see no reason to revisit your father's probable indiscretions at this late date. It's time to let him and this subject rest in peace.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I love my husband dearly, but I have a problem. He talks too much. I'll give you an example: Instead of saying I'd had surgery, he told people I'd had surgery because when I laughed I would wet my pants, so they had to go in and resuspend my bladder. I could hardly believe my ears.

The latest is, he posted something on Facebook about a family member that was also very personal. I have asked him many times to keep details between us, but it does no good. What can I say to him to get this point across? I'm at a loss.

FRUSTRATED IN THE SOUTH

DEAR FRUSTRATED: It's not what you should say to him, it's what you should NOT say. Because your husband lacks judgment, be careful about sharing sensitive information with him and warn your relatives to do the same.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a message for seniors and others who live alone: You need a friend or neighbor to keep in touch with you. Recently at the condo complex where I live, someone complained to the management office about a dog that wouldn't stop barking. When there was no answer on the phone or at the door, they went in. The woman had died and no one knew but her dog.

Our single neighbors now make a point of keeping in touch, if only to say hello and let us know they're OK.

CONNECTED IN PALM COURT, FLA.

DEAR CONNECTED: That's good advice—because the sad circumstance you described happens more often than most people would think. A similar thing also occurred in a condominium development where I lived. A word to the wise ...

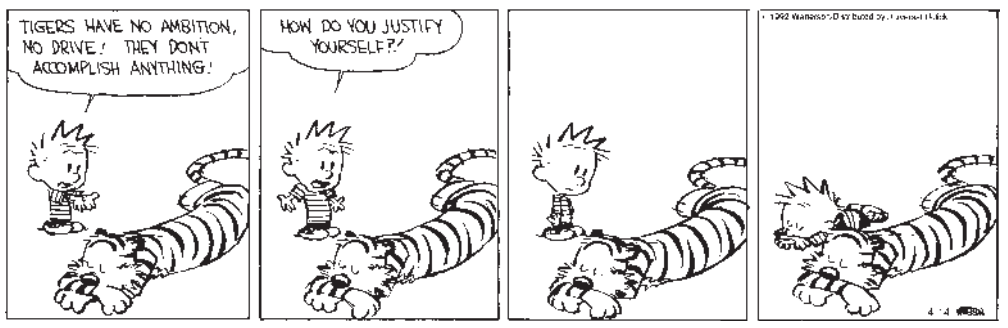
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



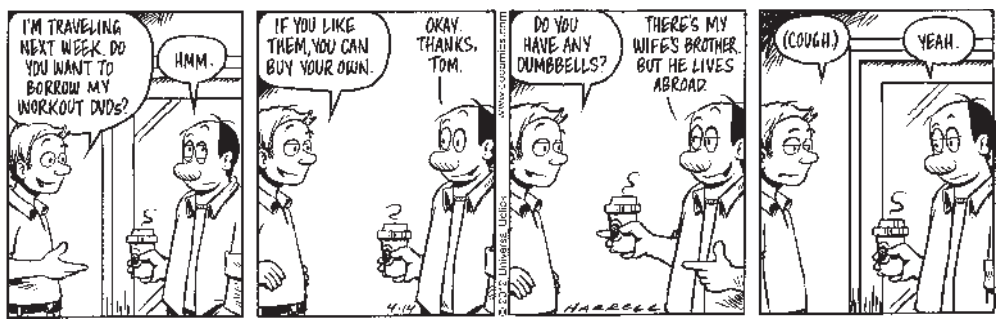
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN LEARN ONLINE
BRAIN-EATING MARTIANS ARE GOING TO GET US!
LIKE HOW GULLIBLE SOME PEOPLE ARE
JIM DAVIS 4-14

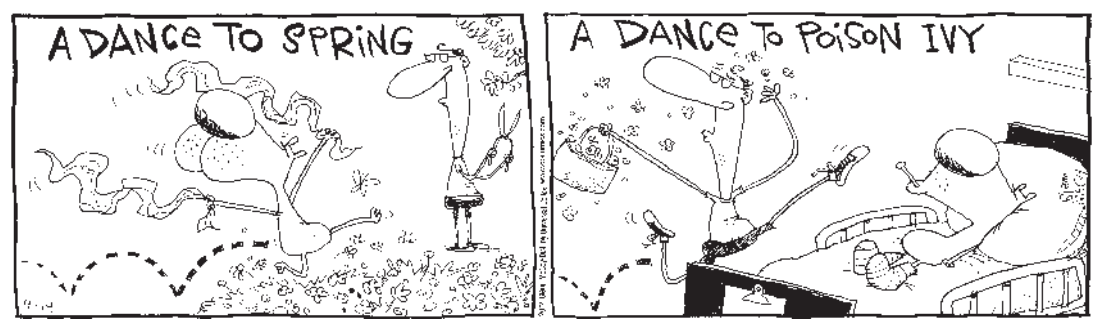
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I'M TRAVELING NEXT WEEK. DO YOU WANT TO BORROW MY WORKOUT DVDS?
HMM.
IF YOU LIKE THEM, YOU CAN BUY YOUR OWN.
OKAY. THANKS, TOM.
DO YOU HAVE ANY DUMBBELLS?
THERE'S MY WIFE'S BROTHER. BUT HE LIVES ABROAD.
(COUGH)
YEAH.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

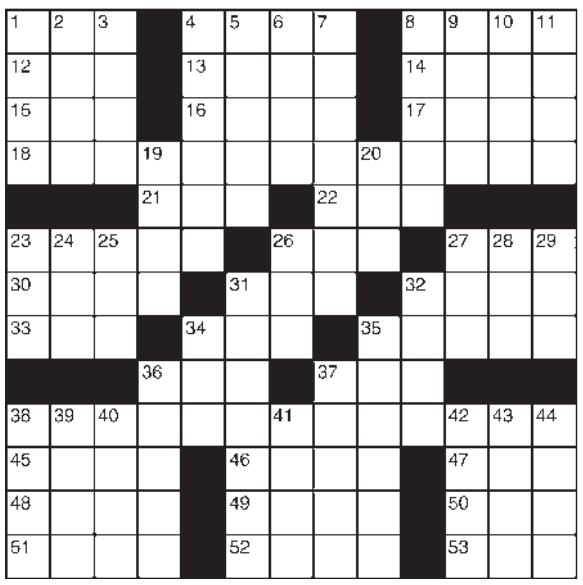
ACROSS
1 AAA job
4 Make coffee, maybe
8 Polio vaccine discoverer
12 Pub order
13 Burn remedy
14 Entreaty
15 Back talk
16 For fear that
17 Whatever remains
18 Dieter's dairy product
21 Unfriendly
22 Shade
23 Nary a soul
26 Predicament
27 "Alice" spinoff
30 Vacationing
31 Mojito ingredient
32 MGM mascot
33 Apiece
34 Leprechauns' dance
35 Ms. Witherspoon
36 Spacecraft compartment
37 "Two and a Half —"
38 Salad option
45 Taj Mahal city
46 Zhivago's love
47 Bronze
48 Close tightly
49 Satan's specialty
50 Bookkeeper (Abbr.)
51 Steerer's place
52 Ceremony
53 Chop

DOWN
1 Body powder
2 Hodgepodge
3 Cried
4 Royal home
5 Mourner's poem
6 Got up
7 "Dennis the Menace" cartoonist Hank
8 Binge
9 Sheltered
10 Not so much
11 William's wife
19 Wee
20 Drone
23 Siesta
24 Have bills
25 Rowing need
26 Moonshine holder
27 "A pox upon thee!"
28 Part of UCLA
29 Inseparable
31 Batman foe played by Jim Carrey
32 Photog's choice
34 Average guy?
35 Auction, perhaps
36 Biblical song
37 Earn
38 Corned beef dish
39 Curved molding
40 Caspian feeder
41 Sitarist Shankar
42 Reason to scratch
43 Scruff
44 Rodents do it

Solution time: 27 mins.

P	A	L	■	L	U	Z	■	R	E	C	A	P
A	L	A	■	O	N	E	■	A	M	U	S	E
V	I	M	■	S	I	L	K	P	U	R	S	E
E	B	B	■	S	T	I	N	T	■	■	■	■
D	I	S	C	■	E	G	O	■	H	A	T	E
■	■	■	H	A	D	■	W	E	A	P	O	N
I	R	O	O	P	■	■	C	R	E	E	D	■
A	U	D	I	T	S	■	H	O	E	■	■	■
B	E	E	R	■	H	M	O	■	M	A	G	I
■	■	■	■	K	O	A	L	A	■	T	O	N
S	A	T	I	N	D	O	L	L	■	B	U	S
O	H	A	I	E	■	R	O	I	■	A	C	E
U	E	N	S	E	■	I	W	O	■	Y	E	I

Yesterday's answer 4-14



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute. touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Abigail Breslin, 16; Sarah Michelle Gellar, 35; Adrien Brody, 39; Brad Garrett, 52.

Happy Birthday: Let your mind wander and your imagination flow. You will come up with unique solutions and interesting concepts that will contribute to a cause or a plan you want to pursue. Enjoy the people you encounter and the choices you create. There is plenty to gain if you use your talents and contribute. Your numbers are 8, 17, 21, 24, 27, 38, 40.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Join forces with people who share your concerns and interests. There is power in numbers, and along with accomplishing something great, you will befriend someone who will make a difference in your future. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Rethink your plans before you leap into something that has the potential to backfire. You need to request more information before you proceed. An emotional relationship will disappoint you if you expect too much in return. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A change will do you good. Sign up for a course or attend an enlightening tradeshow or conference. Get your mind moving in directions that can help you advance personally or professionally. Trust your own judgment, not someone else's. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Size up your financial situation and look for a way to cut costs. Don't be fooled by schemes that promise the impossible. Look at realistic ways to bring in more income or lifestyle changes that can lower your overhead. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You'll be pulled in different directions. Listen to your heart and strive to achieve happiness. You cannot buy love. The best relationship is one built on trust, honesty and being able to enjoy one another's company without it costing you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Spending time getting to know your peers better or looking for ways to improve the quality of your work will pay off. Don't think you don't have to strive for perfection because you have outdone the competition. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Enjoy loved ones or travel to a destination that brings you joy. Self-improvement projects will pay off, and changes in the way you deal with partners will give you an edge. Take the initiative. The sky's the limit. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Don't take what others do or say to heart. Emotional excess can ruin your chance to advance. Strive for greater freedom and success. Overdoing it emotionally, financially or physically will work against you. Personal change will be required. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Get involved in clubs, organizations or community events that will help you build a bigger circle of friends and enhance your reputation. The people you meet now will be of help to you when you want to make personal changes in the future. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't limit your chance to follow your heart because someone is putting demands on you that are not your responsibility. Step aside and make it clear that you will make suggestions but you will not take on what doesn't belong to you. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Spend time at home or with someone whose company you enjoy. A stronger bond or commitment will form if you share your plans for the future. A change in your lifestyle or surroundings will be an excellent pick-me-up. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): A private conversation will help you get a better idea of where you stand with someone you want to get to know better. Don't be afraid to show your true colors or to ask for something you need to get ahead. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent and original. You are helpful and insistent.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

2	6						8	
5						4		2
			8		4		6	
		6	2			3		
				7				
		3			1	9		
	3		5		6			
6		8						1
	7						4	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 4/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	7	6	4	2	1	3	8	9
8	9	4	5	6	3	7	2	1
1	3	2	9	8	7	5	6	4
4	2	1	8	3	6	9	7	5
3	6	7	1	9	5	2	4	8
9	8	5	2	7	4	6	1	3
6	1	9	3	4	2	8	5	7
2	5	3	7	1	8	4	9	6
7	4	8	6	5	9	1	3	2

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 4/13

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

TITANIC—100 YEARS **Solution: 8 letters**

L	C	K	B	S	O	C	E	A	N	D	E	S	O	R
A	E	C	A	A	T	Y	L	L	I	B	N	T	R	E
R	L	O	A	T	L	E	U	F	B	S	R	A	B	G
G	I	D	N	P	E	L	E	G	A	N	T	I	B	N
E	N	J	D	A	T	W	R	L	C	W	E	R	C	E
G	E	E	A	E	R	A	I	O	G	R	A	C	A	S
A	D	I	W	C	C	D	I	N	O	E	T	A	L	S
G	I	V	S	Y	K	K	O	N	S	M	I	S	E	A
G	O	O	O	R	O	O	M	S	M	L	M	E	D	P
U	N	M	N	E	U	R	M	A	I	D	E	N	O	E
L	U	X	U	R	Y	T	K	C	O	U	R	T	N	M
I	B	A	R	T	S	E	H	C	R	O	F	I	L	M
A	S	S	A	L	C	T	S	R	I	F	D	O	O	F
Ⓢ	Ⓗ	Ⓘ	Ⓟ	C	I	N	A	T	I	T	A	N	K	S
E	R	H	A	D	N	A	R	E	V	O	Y	A	G	E

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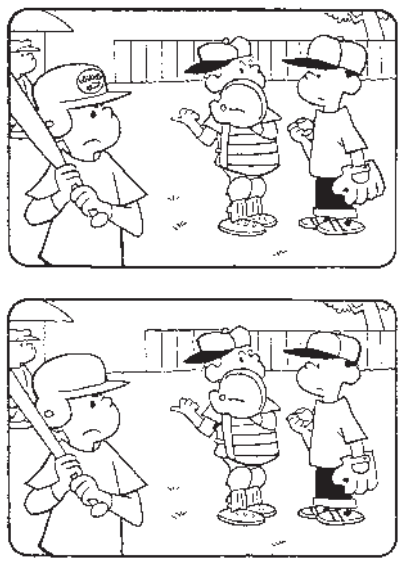
Ballroom, Band, Bars, Billy, Cabin, Caledon, Captain, Cargo, Celine Dion, Court, Crew, Dawson, Deck, Dine, Dock, Elegant, Film, First Class, Food, Fuel, Jack, Kate Winslet, Large, Leonardo, Luggage, Luxury, Maiden, Movie, New York City, Ocean, Orchestra, Passenger, Rooms, Rose, Ruth, Sail, Ship, Staircase, Steel, Tanks, Time, Titanic, Verandah, Voyage

Yesterday's Answer: Register

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



CAN YOU TRUST YOUR EYES? There are at least six differences in drawing details between top and bottom panels. How quickly can you find them? Check answers with those below.

Differences: 1. Fence is shorter. 2. Cap logo is smaller. 3. Bat is thinner. 4. Chest protector is smaller. 5. Cap is smaller. 6. Glove is different.

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Wishing Well®

6	7	8	2	6	8	7	8	4	7	8	4	7
N	E	A	A	O	N	N	A	P	J	L	R	O
3	2	4	3	4	7	4	3	8	4	6	4	7
Y	D	I	O	D	Y	E	U	Y	O	M	F	P
6	5	6	4	2	8	3	4	6	3	6	8	4
O	A	R	C	E	Z	A	H	E	T	T	E	I
3	6	8	3	8	2	7	8	3	7	4	3	7
T	E	E	A	M	C	L	O	I	E	L	N	A
8	3	8	3	4	5	3	6	5	6	8	4	3
T	G	I	O	D	N	A	A	E	R	O	R	L
5	8	5	2	7	2	4	2	4	7	3	2	7
W	N	F	I	S	S	E	I	N	U	S	V	R
8	5	7	6	2	5	7	5	2	5	2	5	2
S	R	E	S	E	I	S	E	D	N	A	D	Y

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Super Crossword

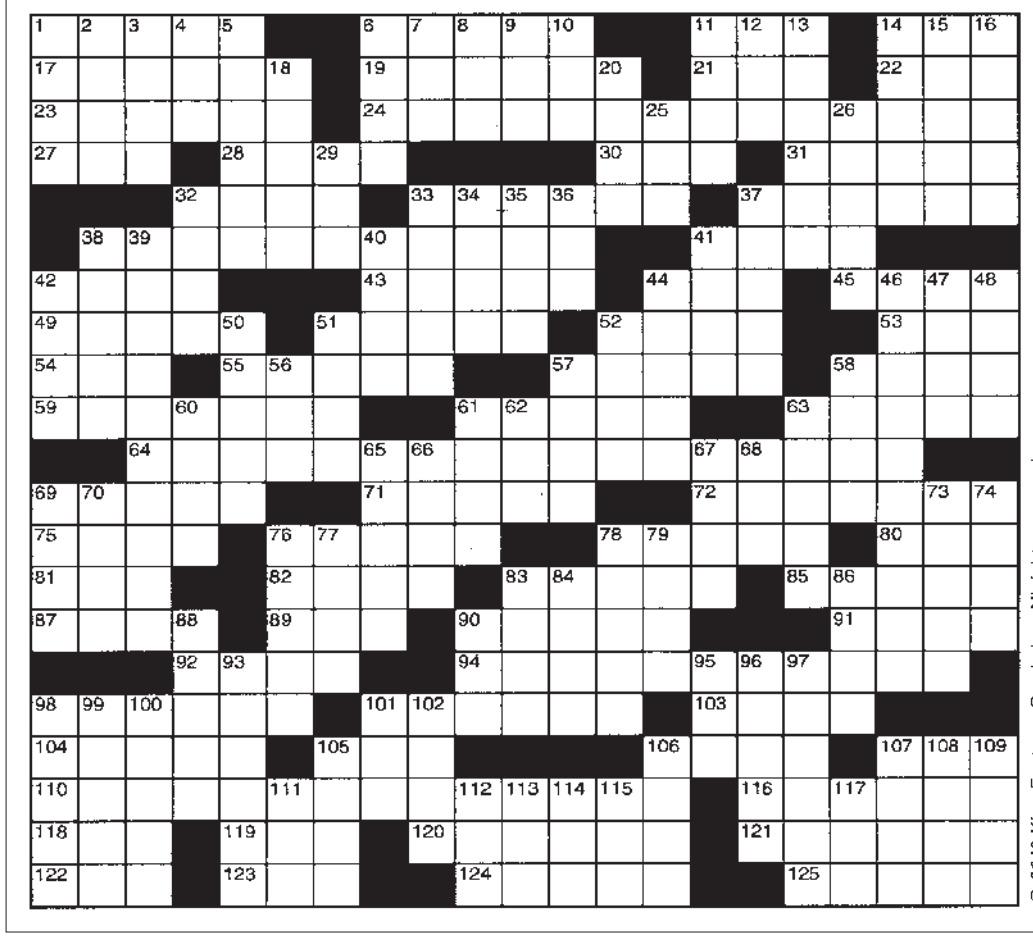
BELIEVE IT OR NOT

ACROSS

1 "Dracula" prop
6 — mignon
11 Roast beef au —
14 Enjoy the Alps
17 Tropical treat
19 Classical hunk?
21 A Turner
22 Another Turner
23 Toed the line
24 Start of a remark by 38 Across
27 Prom wear
28 Idle
30 Fury
31 "Garfield" cartoonist
32 Shalit or Siskel
33 Ned of "Deliverance"
37 Stir up
38 Speaker of remark
41 Carrey title start
42 Windmill part
43 Violinist Mischa
44 Singer Scaggs
45 Cabbage concoction
49 Aquatic animal
51 Bodybuilder Charles
52 "— Show" ('94 film)
53 Private pension
54 Robert of "Quincy, M.E."
55 Restive
57 Trumpeter Berigan
58 Explorer Hedin
59 '68 Tom Jones hit
61 Shatter
63 — suit
64 Part 2 of remark
69 Raid
71 Sinuous dances
72 Jihad
75 Verve
76 Posada of baseball
78 Thin porridge
80 Thurman of "The Avengers"
81 Deighton or Dawson
82 Blows away
83 Isaac's mom
85 Remove varnish
87 Lug
89 Morning moisture
90 Comic Sherman
91 "— It a Pity?" ('70 song)
92 Got older
94 Part 3 of remark
98 Yearned
101 Titania's hubby
103 "Java" man?
104 Tom of "Adam's Rib"
105 Woody herb
106 With 107 Down, "Chocolat" actress
107 Kimono closer
110 End of remark
116 Like some recordings
118 Out — limb
119 Gumshoe
120 Update a story
121 Ida of "The Sea Wolf"
122 Fashion monogram
123 Symbol of sturdiness
124 "Jane Eyre" character
125 Murcia mister

DOWN

1 Primer pooch
2 Forbidden
3 Summit
4 Kyser or Starr
5 Ornamental opening
6 Comic Joey
7 Wedding words
8 "Hulk" Ferrigno
9 SASE, e.g.
10 Mowry of "Sister, Sister"
11 Be in accord
12 Luau instrument
13 Rarely
14 Martin or McQueen
15 Actor Sorbo
16 What i.e. stands for
18 Hersey setting
20 Tizzy
25 Strive
26 Whittier's feet
29 Buddhist movement
32 Merriment
33 Beer storage?
34 Humorist Bombeck
35 Cry of concern
36 Dress size
37 Like a peach
38 Photo finish
39 Narrow-minded
40 One of the Marches
41 Rub out
42 Nullify
44 Swindle
46 Sausage type
47 Precinct
48 Lack
50 Bendix role
51 "— Breaky Heart" ('92 hit)
52 Wharf
56 Prepare to feather?
57 Seeks change?
58 Fluctuate
60 Tenor Kozlovsky
61 Peevishness
62 Genetic info
63 Vends
65 Flung
66 Warm embraces
67 "No dice!"
68 Farm tool
69 Crafter's cloth
70 Toast topper
73 — acid
74 All ears
76 Too experienced
77 Had bills
78 Bit of a beach
79 Be bombastic
83 Disparage
84 Palo —, CA
86 Cast
88 Scout rank
90 Presidential nickname
93 Trattoria treat
95 Heifer or hen
96 Last
97 Telescope sighting
98 Croce's Mr. Brown
99 "Hee Haw" host Buck
100 Mount Everest's locale
101 Absent
102 Grumpy guy
105 Singer Springfield
106 Alzado of football
107 See 106 Across
108 Pro — (free)
109 Perpetual lab assistant
111 Soho snack
112 PBS benefactor
113 Accounting abbr.
114 Tiny
115 "— of You" ('84 hit)
117 "Tarzan" extra



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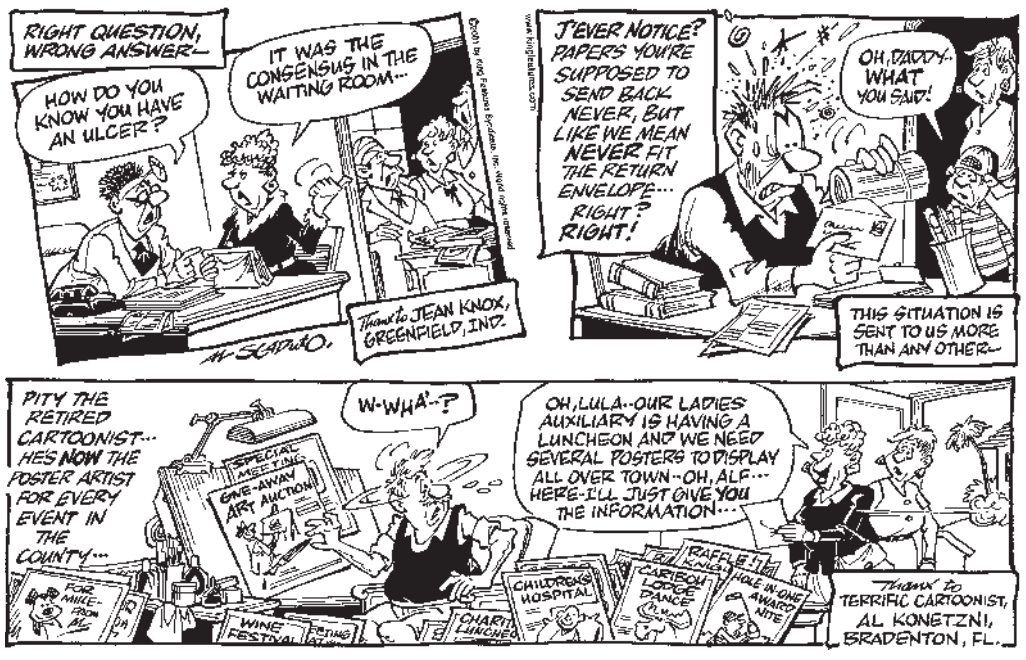
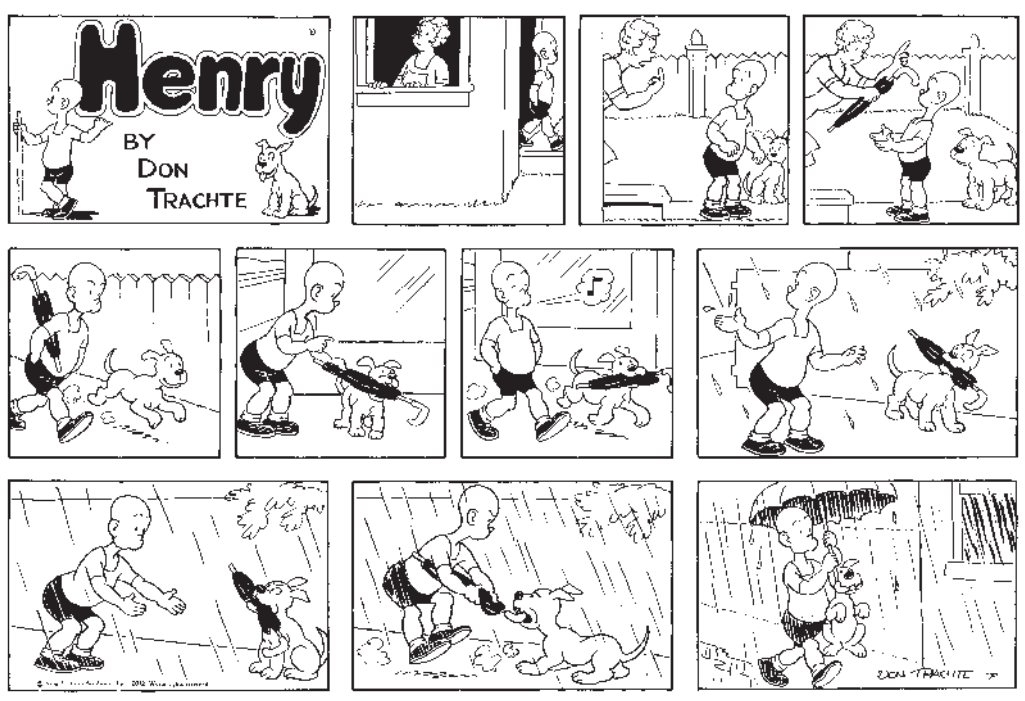
POPEYE
Hy EISMAN
I'M READING THIS TO ALL MY FRIENDS...
...SO THEY'LL BE AWARE OF THE NEW J. WELLINGTON WIMPY
IT'S LIKE A SPRING CLEANING OF THE PSYCHE!
FIRST... NO MORE MOOCHING!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M HEARING THIS!
ME NEITHER
...I INTEND TO SEEK GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT...
...RISE PROMPTLY AT SIX AND ARRIVE EACH WORKDAY AT NINE...
NO MORE MID-DAY NAPS...
...AND LASTLY, MY DIET WILL BE TOTALLY VEGAN...
...MY BURGERS WILL BE MADE OF TOFU!
POP!
WHEW! NO MORE CHILI CON CARNE BEFORE BED-TIME!

They'll Do It Every Time — by Al Scaduto


RIGHT QUESTION, WRONG ANSWER—
HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU HAVE AN ULCER?
IT WAS THE CONSENSUS IN THE WAITING ROOM...
Thanks to JEAN KNOX, GREENFIELD, IND.
I'EVER NOTICE? PAPERS YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SEND BACK NEVER, BUT LIKE WE MEAN NEVER FIT THE RETURN ENVELOPE... RIGHT? RIGHT!
OH, DADDY... WHAT YOU SAID!
THIS SITUATION IS SENT TO US MORE THAN ANY OTHER—
PITY THE RETIRED CARTOONIST... HE'S NOW THE POSTER ARTIST FOR EVERY EVENT IN THE COUNTY...
W-WHA'-?
OH, LULA.. OUR LADIES AUXILIARY IS HAVING A LUNCHEON AND WE NEED SEVERAL POSTERS TO DISPLAY ALL OVER TOWN.. OH, ALF... HERE-I'LL JUST GIVE YOU THE INFORMATION...
Thanks to TERRIFIC CARTOONIST, AL KONETZNI, BRADENTON, FL.



Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. ART: Which French painter is known for his depictions of ballerinas?
2. ANATOMY: Where is the hyoid bone located?
3. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is the only mammal that can fly on its own?
4. GEOGRAPHY: What is the smallest U.S. state in land area?
5. TELEVISION: What was the theme song of the TV sitcom "Married with Children"?
6. MOVIES: Who played the dad in the film "The Shining"?
7. ADVERTISEMENTS: What product did the first television advertisement feature?
8. HISTORY: Aside from Rome, where did the popes of the Catholic Church reside for a brief period in the Middle Ages?
9. PERSONALITIES: What actor got his start as a circus performer?
10. FAMOUS QUOTES: Who once said, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen"?

Trivia Answers

1. Edgar Degas
2. Throat
3. A bat
4. Rhode Island
5. "Love and Marriage" by Frank Sinatra
6. Jack Nicholson
7. Bulova watches
8. Avignon, France
9. Pierce Brosnan
10. President Harry Truman

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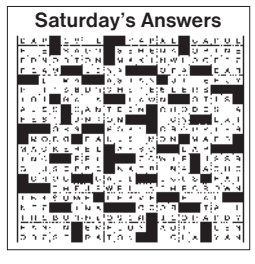
Saturday's Answers



The Spats — by Jeff Pickering

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

AVIS RENT A CAR is looking for highly motivated individuals with great customer service and a friendly and outgoing personality to fill the following positions:

FULL TIME RENTAL SALES AGENTS
- Japanese Speaking preferred
- Must have computer skills

ON CALL PART-TIME AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE DETAILER

Applicants must posses a high school diploma or equivalent, have a valid driver's license, and be willing to work flexible hours.

All applications and resumes can be submitted to our AVIS counter located at the Saipan International Airport. No phone calls please.

AVIS We try harder.

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Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 02-2012

Opening date: April 14, 2012 • Closing date: April 30, 2012

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) announces the following job vacancy:

Position:
(2) Ports Police Trainee (Saipan)
(3) ARFF Trainee (Saipan)
(1) ARFF Mechanic-III (Saipan)
(1) Radio Operator/Weather Observer (Rota)
(1) AOA Controller/Ground Mainetenance-I (Tinian)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members of veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the CPA Administrative Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. For Rota vacancy, applications may be picked up at the CPA's Administration Office of the Rota International Airport; and for Tinian's vacancy, applications may be picked up at CPA's Administration Office of the Tinian International Airport; or it may be downloaded by visiting CPA's website at www.cpa.gov.mp. Failure to provide any of the required documents may result in automatic disqualification. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening. The deadline for submission of applications is no later than ***4:30p.m., April 30, 2012.***

Detailed information on qualifications and position description for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form during regular working hours at the CPA's Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Saipan International Airport, Arrival Wing, or may be downloaded by visiting CPA's website at www.cpa.gov.mp For more information, please contact Ms. Addy C. Manahane by email at acmanahane@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670) 237-6500.

**All ARFF/Ports Police Trainee applicants must undergo a physical fitness test.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI

/s/ EDWARD M. DELEON GUERRERO
Executive Director

WHATZIT Solution:
Assault and battery

EMPLOYMENT

1-Fisherman (Bottom / Trolling / Diving) W/ 6 mos. experience required. Minimum Salary. Send resume to SMJ Corporation, P.O. Box 503944 Saipan MP 96950.

Looking for 1 Hollow Block . Machine Operator, 1 HE Operator. Pls call 888-1472

WANTED TO BUY

Need cash fast??? We want to buy your OnePass miles or Skymiles!!! Call 888-2205.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

2 Bedroom Apartment for Rent. For $200.00 / month. Koblerville, please call 288-0728.

2 Bedroom apartment, Located in CK, along Texas Road. Fully furnished. $275.00 per month. Trash and Sewer included. Call 233-1190 or 287-8218

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 1-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

"My wish is to have my own PC with a DVD player and CD burner!"

25 years of making wishes of eligible children with life-threatening illnesses come true!

MAKE-A-WISH®

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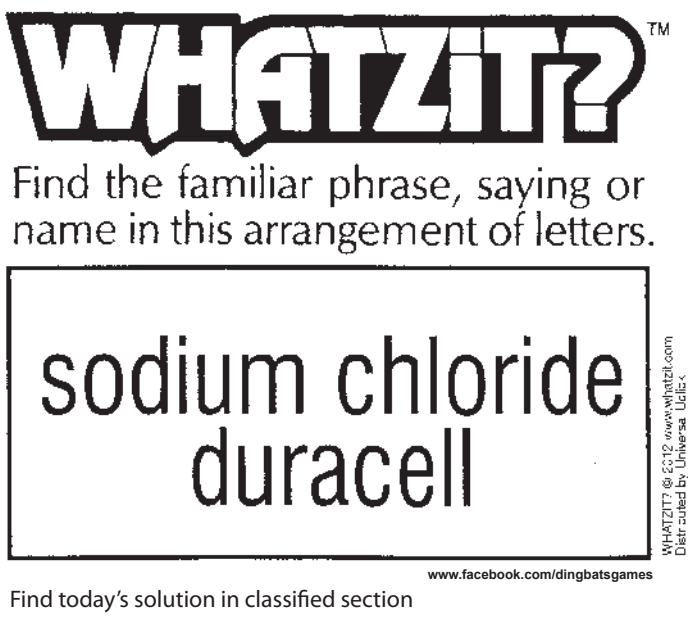
www.wish.org
Office Hours: 8:30am to 5:30pm, M-F daily

Saipan Tribune



Find today's solution in classified section

Boozer scores 19, Bulls beat Heat in OT

CHICAGO (AP)—Had he known he was going to play so poorly, Derrick Rose might have sat this one out. Good thing for him, his Chicago teammates picked up the slack.

C.J. Watson scored 16 points, including the game-tying 3-pointer at the end of regulation, and the Chicago Bulls pulled away in overtime to beat the Miami Heat 96-86 on Thursday night.

Carlos Boozer scored 19 points and Kyle Korver added 17 for the Bulls, who outscored Miami 12-2 in overtime to boost their lead in the Eastern Conference to four games.

The Bulls were able to pull off the victory despite a horrible shooting night by Derrick Rose, who scored a career-low two points.

"If I'd have seen this coming, I wouldn't have played," he said. "Thought I was going to come out, do all right."

At least his team did just fine.

LeBron James scored 30 points for Miami but missed a free throw that would have made it a two-possession game late in regulation. Dwyane Wade added 21 points, Chris Bosh scored 20, but the Heat lost for the sixth time in 11 games.

"This is one of the worst feelings in the regular season I've had this year," James said.

Things were looking good for Miami when James nailed a 3 that made it 83-81 with 49 seconds left in regulation. But with a chance to seal the game, he missed the first of two free throws with 11.4 seconds remaining.

That kept the Bulls in it and Watson made a 3 to tie it at 84 with 2.2 seconds left. The game went into overtime when Wade missed a baseline jumper at the buzzer.

Deng started the extra period with a jumper. Taj Gibson dunked on Ronny Turiaf for a three-point play and scored on a neat spin move after Wade hit a free throw, making it 91-85, sending the Bulls to a dramatic win on a night when their superstar had perhaps his worst game as a pro.

"I'm not worried about my stats or anything," Rose said. "Can I make up excuses? Yeah. But you know me, I'm not going to use no excuse. My shots weren't falling. Shots I normally hit, I wasn't hitting. My teammates had my back. I'm happy I have them on my team."

Rose hit just 1 of 13 shots and sat out the extra period, a brutal night for the reigning MVP. Then again, he hasn't played much lately, so this wasn't a total shocker.

He returned from a 12-game absence due to a groin injury for Sunday's overtime loss at New York, only to sprain his right ankle. He did not play Tuesday, when the Bulls beat the Knicks at home, and he's missed 23 games in all this season.

"He's going to be a little rusty," Korver said. "I don't care who you are, you're going to be a little rusty."

But even with Rose struggling, the Bulls managed to pull this one out.

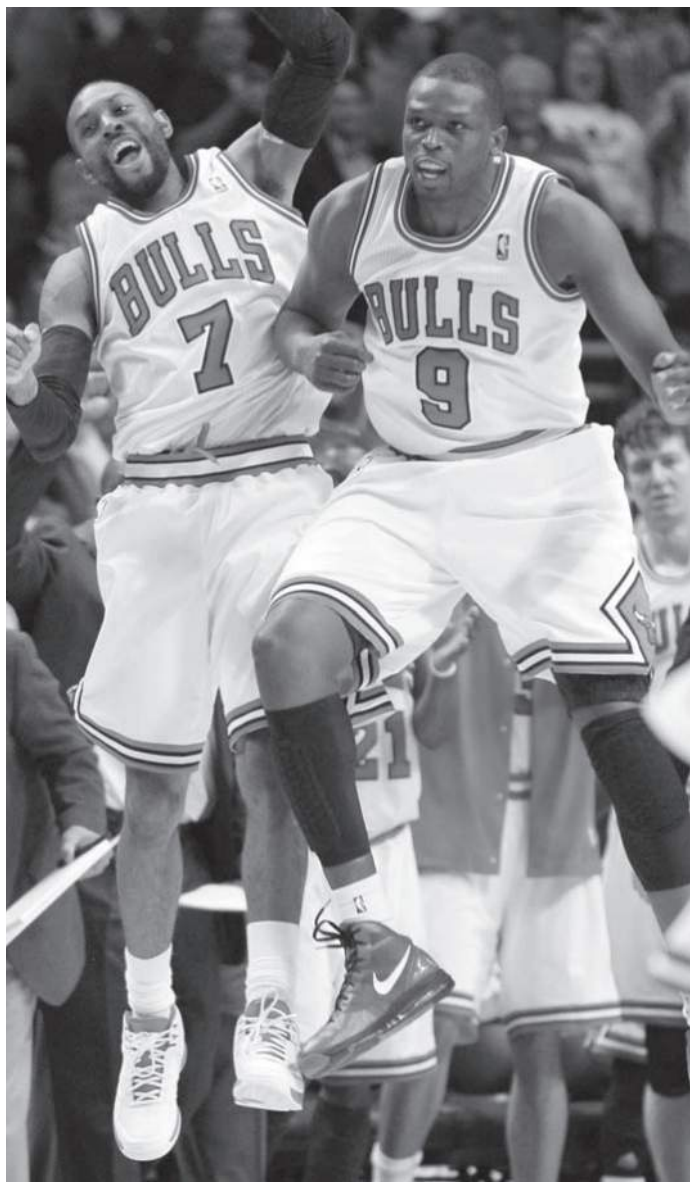
Luol Deng scored 16. Boozer grabbed 11 rebounds and fed Watson for that tying 3. Korver came up big again, hitting 5 of 6 from beyond the arc after scoring 14 on Tuesday.

He let out a big smile after nailing one in the extra period and helped the Bulls and helped send this one into overtime with eight points in the fourth quarter.

His 3-pointer and jumper put Chicago ahead 78-74 with about 3:30 left, and after Wade scored, Boozer nailed a jumper and Ronnie Brewer hit a free throw to put the Bulls' lead at 5.

Wade, however, kept Miami in it.

He scored on a drive and a jumper to make it a one-point game, and Bosh came up with a key rebound off a miss by Wade, feeding James for the 3 that made it 83-81. But things unraveled for the Heat, particularly when Watson hit the 3 to force OT.



AP

Chicago Bulls guard C.J. Watson (7) celebrates with forward Luol Deng (9) after Watson scored a three-point basket during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Miami Heat in Chicago, Thursday, April 12, 2012.

"I looked up and saw CJ wide open when Boozer caught it," Wade said. "I didn't know what was going on. I tried to get over there and make a play on it. He still made a tough shot. That play hurt. We never recovered back from that shot."

Spurs 107, Grizzlies 97

In San Antonio, Tim Duncan had 28 points and 12 rebounds as San Antonio broke out of a form slump and beat surging Memphis.

Manu Ginobili added 20 points for the Spurs, who responded to being beaten heavily by the Kobe Bryant-less Los Angeles Lakers in their previous game.

Rudy Gay's 19 points led the Grizzlies, who had their four-game winning streak halted after their rally from a late 14-point deficit fizzled in the final minutes.

Memphis fell 1-1/2 games behind the Los Angeles Clippers for the No. 4 playoff seed.

Clippers 95, Timberwolves 82

In Minneapolis, Blake Griffin had 19 points and 13 rebounds to lead Los Angeles over Minnesota.

Caron Butler scored 17 points for the Clippers, who are a game behind the Lakers for the third seed in the West and 1-1/2 games ahead of Memphis for the fourth seed.

Michael Beasley had 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who have lost eight straight games. They have not won a game in the month of April since 2009.

The Wolves were playing without All-Star Kevin Love, who missed the game with a mild concussion.

Mavericks 112, Warriors 103

In Oakland, Dirk Nowitzki scored 27 points to lead Dallas past Golden State.

Former Golden State lottery draft pick Brandan Wright had 16 points and nine rebounds for the Mavericks, who led by 19 points early before the game tightened.

The win moved the defending NBA champions 1-1/2 games behind Memphis for the Western Conference's fifth playoff seed and half a game ahead of Denver and Houston.

David Lee had 30 points and eight rebounds for the Warriors who have lost three straight and are out of playoff contention.

Pistons 109, Bobcats 85

In Charlotte, Detroit salvaged something out of a four-game road trip by beating woeful Charlotte.

Greg Monroe had 25 points and 11 rebounds while Brandon Knight added 21 points and seven assists. Monroe was 11-for-14 from the field.

The Pistons had lost their previous games away to Atlanta, Miami and Orlando, the final two by a combined margin of 53 points.

But they had no such problems with Bobcats, who became the first team this season to lose 50 games.

NBA BRIEFS

Wade says money not an Olympic motivator

MIAMI (AP)—Heat guard Dwyane Wade says money is not his motivation for the London Games this summer. In a statement Thursday, Wade said, "I do not want to be paid to go to the Olympics." Wade was quoted Wednesday saying he thinks "guys should be compensated" for playing over the summer and noted the schedule demands of being an Olympian. He said he was responding to a question about Olympians being paid, and never said he needed to be paid to play. Wade later tweeted that pride for his country "motivates me more than any $$$ amount." Wade played for the U.S. at Athens in 2004 and Beijing in 2008, and has said the London Games would be his last.

Hip surgery for Blazers' Aldridge; done for season

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Trail Blazers forward LaMarcus Aldridge will have surgery on his right hip and miss the rest of the season. The team said Thursday no date has been set for the arthroscopic procedure, which will repair a slight labral tear. Aldridge says he has had pain for about two weeks and is unsure how the injury occurred. "I'm just happy we know what it is now and we can move forward," said Aldridge, who traveled to Vail, Colo., his week for a closer look at the injury after an earlier MRI didn't show it. Aldridge is averaging 21.7 points, 8.0 rebounds and 2.4 assists this season while shooting a career-high 51.2 percent. The 6-foot-11 power forward in his sixth year called the tear "minor" and said he was being proactive in having the procedure. Aldridge had surgery to repair torn cartilage in his left hip when he was at Texas in 2005. He said that injury was much more severe.

Campbell, Taylor, Knost share RBC Heritage lead

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. (AP)—Chad Campbell used a fast start, and Vaughn Taylor and Colt Knost had strong finishes to share the first-round lead at 4-under 67 in the RBC Heritage on Thursday.

Campbell birdied four of his first seven holes, Knost birdied three of his last five, and Taylor holed out from the fairway for a closing eagle on the par-4 ninth hole at Harbour Town Golf Links.

Jim Furyk, the 2010 winner, was a stroke back along with Harris English, Charlie Wi and Matt Every. Forty-two players, including John Daly in just his second PGA Tour event this year, were at even par or better.

Masters winner Bubba Watson took the week off as did most players ranked in the world's top 20. No. 1 Luke Donald, who has been second, third and second here the past three years, opened with a 75. He has to finish in the top eight or surrender to the top spot to No. 2 Rory McIlroy next week.

Matt Kuchar was tied for the lead at Augusta National with three holes left before finishing two shots out of the playoff between Watson and Louis Oosthuizen, Kuchar hoped to continue his strong play at Harbour Town, but ended in a large group at 1-over 72.

Campbell held a first-round lead for the first time since the 2009 Masters. His game has faded some since then—he recorded just one top 10 at the British Open last year, his fewest since coming out on tour in 2002—and has missed five cuts in nine tournaments this year.

"I haven't felt like I've been that far off," Campbell said. "But the results haven't been good at all."

Campbell got it going quickly at Harbour Town with an 8-foot birdie putt on No. 2 and then consecutive birdies on the fourth and fifth holes. He moved to 4 under two holes later, rolling in a 20-footer for birdie.

Campbell added a final birdie on the 15th.

Campbell said the wind reminded him of his days playing golf in West Texas. "Other than the trees and the ocean," he joked.

Taylor caught Campbell with his stunning shot from 103 yards out on his final hole, the ninth. Taylor, a native of Augusta, Ga., also has struggled and teed off at the RBC Heritage on a sponsor's exemption. He fell back to even par with a double bogey on the 16th hole before heating up on his last nine. He made birdies on the second, fourth and seventh holes before stunning the gallery—and himself—with his on-target sand wedge.

"I hit a smooth one," Taylor said. "Came off right, right at it, and fortunate enough to go in."

Knost joined the leaders with a late charge of his own, collecting birdies on the 14th, 16th and 18th holes. Knost thinks this might be just the thing to jump start a sluggish year—his lone top 20 was a third place at the Mayakoba Classic in February.

"It's just my kind of course," Knost said. "You have to hit it fairly straight. Distance isn't that big a deal. The greens are real small, just give yourself a lot of chances."

That's the way Furyk played Harbour Town, too. His problem? Starting in the chily, windy conditions not usually seen during most Aprils in South Carolina.

He played straight and steady throughout, building on a tie for 11th last week at Augusta National. "I'm happy to get in with the score I did," he said.

Donald has 11 straight rounds under par at Harbour Town before chopping it around Thursday. The Englishman made just one birdie and was well below Friday's projected cut line.

Still, it was hard not to notice the pleased faces of competitors, organizers and fans with the re-christened tournament. It's the first year for title-sponsor RBC and presenting-sponsor Boeing after the tournament went without a backer in 2011 and was in danger of disappearing.

Saints name Vitt interim coach for 2012 season

NEWORLEANS(AP)—Sean Payton handed over control of his team to Joe Vitt once before and the Saints have decided to do it again.

The Saints Thursday named Payton's trusted second-in-command their interim coach, despite the fact that Vitt will miss a third of the season for his role in New Orleans' bounty system.

For his part, Payton received a season-long suspension—which begins Monday; Vitt, who takes over Monday, was handed a six-game suspension.

Saints general manager Mickey Loomis said in his announcement that the team will address at a later time how to divvy up Vitt's responsibilities during his six-week absence.

"It is important that we keep Sean Payton's philosophy front and center during this season," Loomis said. "Sean has been the driving force behind the tremendous success our team has enjoyed during the past six years, his leadership will be missed. But we need to set a course of action that gives us the best chance to win this season without our head coach.

"We considered a number of great options to handle Payton's duties both internally and externally, but believe this will provide the most seamless transition for our players and our coaching staff, allowing our offensive and defensive staffs to remain intact with the fewest changes," Loomis continued. "This is the same structure we used last season during Sean's knee injury."

Vitt, who carries the titles of assistant head coach and linebackers coach, briefly stepped in as acting head coach last season when Payton broke his leg. Vitt also was interim coach with St. Louis in 2005 before joining New Orleans as part of Payton's very first staff in 2006.

Vitt will be able to oversee the offseason training program and training camp before stepping aside for the first six weeks of the regular season.

AP

New Orleans Saints assistant coach Joe Vitt, right, arrives with attorney David Cornwell for a meeting at NFL headquarters in New York, Thursday, April 5, 2012.

The NFL played no role in the decision-making process.

"It's the Saints' decision," NFL spokesman Greg Aiello said, adding the team did not have to get approval from the league to make Vitt the interim coach.

Loomis said the Saints expect to have a plan laid out for Vitt's absence by training camp.

"We are fortunate to have a great veteran coaching staff well equipped to handle this challenge," Loomis said. "Joe and Sean have worked closely together to build our program, one of the most successful in the NFL in the past six years, and I have the fullest confidence that Joe will continue that success that Sean has brought us."

The Saints' assistants who can pick up the slack during Vitt's absence include: offensive coordinator Pete Carmichael, offensive line coach Aaron Kromer and new defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo.

■ Carmichael joined the Saints in 2006, began calling plays after Payton's injury last season. Payton allowed Carmichael to continue calling plays through the final 10 regular season games of 2011 as the Saints went 9-1 and broke numerous NFL offensive records.

■ Kromer oversees the running game, will be entering his fifth season in New Orleans and like Carmichael has been mentioned as an up-and-coming head coaching candidate around the NFL.

■ Spagnuolo was a head coach in St. Louis the past three seasons and defensive coordinator for the New York Giants' 2007-08 Super Bowl winning team.

The decision gives Saints players a measure of certainty and direction as the Monday opening of the offseason training program approaches.

Still looming, however, are possible punishments for between 22 and 27 current and former Saints defenders that the NFL says participated in the crunch-for-cash bounty system that disgraced former Saints defensive coordinator has apologized for running for the previous three seasons.

The league's investigation found that Williams' bounty system offered off-the-books cash payments of $1,500 for "knockouts," in which an opposing player was knocked out of a game, or $1,000 for "cart-offs," in which an opponent needed help off the field. The league has said the bounty pool grew as large as $50,000.

The investigation also found that Payton initially lied about the existence of a bounty program and instructed his defensive assistants to do the same.

Loomis received an eight-game suspension for failing to ensure the program was stopped after the NFL first asked him to do so in early 2010.

The franchise, meanwhile, was fined $500,000 and docked second-round draft choices this year and next, although NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has said he may lessen the 2013 penalty by modifying which pick the Saints lose if the club cooperates with the NFL's ongoing probe.

Williams, who was hired as defensive coordinator in St. Louis after last season, has been suspended indefinitely. His penalty will be up for review after next season.

Nationals beat Reds on wild pitch

WASHINGTON (AP)—Washington's Ryan Zimmerman scored on Alfredo Simon's wild pitch with two outs in the 10th inning, helping the Nationals beat the Cincinnati Reds 3-2 on Thursday and extend their best start since moving to the national capital.

The Nationals improved to 5-2, top of the National League East, and gave the sellout crowd a win in the home opener for the first time since 2008.

Simon (0-1) hit Zimmerman with a pitch leading off the 10th, and one out later, Jayson Werth singled. A groundout pushed the runners to second and third. Simon then threw in the dirt, the catcher retrieved it and tossed it to Simon racing into home plate but Zimmerman slid under the tag.

Washington's Craig Stammen (1-0) had struck out the side in the top of the 10th for the win.

Dodgers 3, Pirates 2

In Los Angeles, Chris Capuano struck out seven in his first home game with Los Angeles, which completed a three-game sweep of Pittsburgh.

The Dodgers scored all of their runs to set up a win that made them 6-1; their best start since 1981, when they went on to win the World Series.

Capuano (1-0) allowed two runs with no walks in 5 1-3 innings. He struck out five of his first eight batters, four of them on called third strikes.

L.A. closer Javy Guerra pitched a perfect ninth for his fifth save in five attempts—all in a span of eight days.

Pirates starter Jeff Karstens (0-1) gave up seven hits.

Diamondbacks 3, Padres 1

In San Diego, Arizona pitcher Ian Kennedy struck out nine in six innings to remain perfect in six career starts against San Diego.

Kennedy (2-0) allowed one run and improved his career ERA against the Padres to 1.95. He is 8-0 in his past nine starts against all opponents.

Jason Kubel doubled in the go-ahead run in the sixth inning for the Diamondbacks and Chris Young added a solo homer in the eighth.

San Diego's Micah Owings (0-2), pitching against his old team, took the loss after allowing an unearned run in the sixth.

Cubs 8, Brewers 0

In Chicago, Matt Garza pitched 8 2-3 scoreless innings to help Chicago beat Milwaukee and avoid a four-game series sweep.

Garza (1-0) struck out nine and had a spell where he retired 16 of 17 batters from the second inning on. He left after 119 pitches and overthrowing the first baseman for a two-base error.

Brewers starter Zack Greinke (1-1) allowed eight earned runs for the first time in two seasons. He needed 84 pitches to get through 3 2-3 innings.

Phillies 3, Marlins 1

In Philadelphia, Shane Victorino and Ty Wigginton homered in Philadelphia's defeat of Miami.

Phillies starter Joe Blanton (1-1) pitched seven strong innings allowing one run in his first start.

The Marlins lost their second straight game without manager Ozzie Guillen who was suspended by the club for saying he admired Cuban dictator Fidel Castro — a comment that upset many in Florida's Cuban community.

Miami starter Mark Buehrle (0-2) allowed three runs in 6 1-3 innings.

Giants 4, Rockies 2

In Denver, Colorado's 49-year-old Jamie Moyer failed in his second attempt to become the oldest pitcher to win a major league game.

Moyer (0-2) surrendered four runs in 5 1-3 innings and left to a standing ovation from forgiving home fans.

Opposing pitcher Madison Bumgarner (1-1)—a 22-year-old who wasn't born when Moyer debuted in the majors—took a no-hit bid into the sixth and stifled a Rockies lineup that had produced 17 runs the night before. He gave up one run while throwing 117 pitches.

Tigers 7, Rays 2

In Detroit, Tigers' Brennan Boesch drove in four runs on his 27th birthday, leading the Tigers to a victory over the Tampa Bay Rays for their fifth win in six games to start the season.

Despite having the American League's best record, Detroit's starters have not yet had a win, and that continued Friday as Drew Smyly went empty handed from his major league debut. Instead, Collin Balester (1-0) won this one with two innings of relief.

The Tigers trailed 1-0 until scoring three runs off Jeff Niemann (0-1) in the fifth.

Rangers 5, Mariners 3

In Arlington, Texas, Michael Young hit a two-run homer and had four RBIs to power Texas past Seattle.

Young put Texas ahead with an RBI single. Then with the Rangers leading 1-0 in the fifth inning, he hit an opposite-field homer for a 3-0 lead against Jason Vargas (1-1). Young added a run-scoring single in the eighth.

Texas starter Derek Holland (1-0) allowed two runs in 7 1-3 innings, struck out eight and walked none. However the 22-2/3 innings scoreless streak by Rangers starters ended in the sixth.

Twins 10, Angels 9

In Minneapolis, Justin Morneau hit a two-run, tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning to complete Minnesota's comeback from a six-run deficit against Los Angeles.

Joe Mauer went deep, too, hitting a three-run shot in the fifth. Every Twins batter had at least one of the team's 20 hits, enough to make up for the 14 men left on base, including eight in scoring position.

Angels pitcher Rich Thompson (0-1) gave up Morneau's first home run of the season.

Jeff Gray (2-0) picked up the victory, and Matt Capps notched his second save despite giving the Angels two runs back.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	34	24	.586	–
Philadelphia	31	27	.534	3
New York	30	28	.517	4
New Jersey	21	38	.356	13 1/2
Toronto	20	39	.339	14 1/2

Southeast Division

x-Miami	40	17	.702	–
Atlanta	34	24	.586	6 1/2
Orlando	34	24	.586	6 1/2
Washington	14	44	.241	26 1/2
Charlotte	7	50	.123	33

Central Division

y-Chicago	45	14	.763	–
Indiana	36	22	.621	8 1/2
Milwaukee	28	30	.483	16 1/2
Detroit	22	36	.379	22 1/2
Cleveland	19	37	.339	24 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

x-San Antonio	41	16	.719	–
Memphis	34	24	.586	7 1/2
Dallas	33	26	.559	9
Houston	32	26	.552	9 1/2
New Orleans	16	42	.276	25 1/2

Northwest Division

y-Oklahoma City	42	16	.724	–
Denver	32	26	.552	10
Utah	31	28	.525	11 1/2
Portland	28	31	.475	14 1/2
Minnesota	25	35	.417	18

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	37	22	.627	–
L.A. Clippers	36	23	.610	1
Phoenix	30	28	.517	6 1/2
Golden State	22	36	.379	14 1/2
Sacramento	19	40	.322	18

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Detroit 109, Charlotte 85
Chicago 96, Miami 86, OT
L.A. Clippers 95, Minnesota 82
San Antonio 107, Memphis 97
Dallas 112, Golden State 103

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	4	2	.667	–
Toronto	4	2	.667	–
Baltimore	3	3	.500	1
New York	3	3	.500	1
Boston	1	5	.167	3

Central Division

Detroit	5	1	.833	–
Chicago	3	2	.600	1 1/2
Kansas City	3	3	.500	2
Minnesota	2	4	.333	3
Cleveland	1	4	.200	3 1/2

West Division

Texas	5	2	.714	–
Seattle	4	4	.500	1 1/2
Oakland	3	4	.429	2
Los Angeles	2	4	.333	2 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Washington	5	2	.714	–
New York	4	2	.667	1/2
Philadelphia	3	3	.500	1 1/2
Atlanta	2	4	.333	2 1/2
Miami	2	5	.286	3

Central Division

St. Louis	5	2	.714	–
Milwaukee	4	3	.571	1
Houston	3	3	.500	1 1/2
Cincinnati	3	4	.429	2
Pittsburgh	2	4	.333	2 1/2
Chicago	2	5	.286	3

West Division

Los Angeles	6	1	.857	–
Arizona	5	1	.833	1/2
Colorado	2	4	.333	3 1/2
San Francisco	2	4	.333	3 1/2
San Diego	2	5	.286	4

Yesterday's Games

Washington 3, Cincinnati 2, 10 innings
Chicago Cubs 8, Milwaukee 0
San Francisco 4, Colorado 2
Philadelphia 3, Miami 1
Arizona 3, San Diego 1
L.A. Dodgers 3, Pittsburgh 2
Detroit 7, Tampa Bay 2
Minnesota 10, L.A. Angels 9
Texas 5, Seattle 3

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COMETS

From Page 28

Falcons fended off the DPS Dare Program Enforcers, 13-9, last Saturday, while IT&E Fielders pitcher Kainao Wanket issued the DYS-Rep. Ramon Basa-Frederick P. Deleon Guerrero Kagman Lions a 12-0 one-hit shutout in five innings last April 5.

MAJOR DIVISION
Comets 12, A's 6

The A's Donavin Ada busted an RBI double and scored off an error in the opening frame, but the Comets broke the lock off the gate in the bottom frame and answered with six runs off an RBI single by Erik Cruz, two errors, a wild pitch, a passed ball, and a triple by Austin Hocog. Hocog later scored from a passed ball.

The A's grinded out three runs in the second inning off some early nerves by the Comets' infield.

Then in the bottom portion, the Comets' Vincent Taman and Ethan Babauta cranked a pair of doubles for two runs and Hocog hit a solo shot later in the third to put the Comets in front, 8-5.

Both teams traded a run in the fourth and Comets reliever Babauta kept the A's at bay late in the game.

Comets' Hocog batted 3-for-3 with three RBIs and two runs, while Erik Cruz swung 3-for-4 with two RBIs and a run.

Comets pitching duo of Cruz and Babauta split time and held the A's to just three hits and tallied 14 strikeouts.

Legals 14, Braves 8

The game was deadlocked at 4-all after four frames and the Little Legals' top of the order hung up four runs in the top of the fifth inning off five hits; Jose Camacho bagged an RBI single and later stole home, while the other runs came home off a wild pitch and an error.

The Braves answered with four hits for three runs in the bottom frame. Andres Camacho led off with a double and stole the dish, Napu Pua stole home, and Angel Iguel drove in Brandon Pua.

The Legals jumped on the newly installed pitcher at the start of the sixth and final inning and pushed ahead, 14-7, off four hits.

A leadoff walk made it around off an error, Maratita doubled home Camacho and stole a plate, and Sidro Tebuteb signed off for the Legals with a three-run home run.

Camacho batted 3-for-4 with an RBI, four runs, and two stolen bases. Maratita lifted a two-run homer in the first inning and finished the game 3-for-4 with three RBIs, three runs, and two stolen bases. Tebuteb swung 2-for-3 with three RBIs, two runs, and a stolen base.

Rays 8, A's 3

The Rays worked up a 3-1 lead in the opening frame off a pair of leadoff doubles by Kody Omengkar and Jay Kalen (RBI). Nnes Siech and Nathaniel Torres also delivered a pair of RBI pokes.

A's pitcher Christian Lizama struck out the side to start the second, but his teammates only managed one run after loading the bases in the bottom frame.

The A's jitters carried over on the field and they allowed three runs in the top of the third off two hits and some errors; Torres bagged another RBI single.

Then the Rays went ahead, 7-2, in the fourth inning off another error.

A's Donavin Ada connected with a leadoff triple and scored off a wild pitch in the bottom frame, but the Rays put a lid on it from there.

Winning pitcher Manny Espon gave up three earned runs off five hits, six walks, and a bean ball with eight strikeouts through 4 2/3 innings.

Ol'Aces 11, IT&E 0

The Ol'Aces skipped ahead, 3-0, in the first inning off three hits. Kimo Angailen and Glenn Calvo belted RBI doubles.

Ol' Aces then cranked out five runs in the fourth inning off four hits. Angailen poked an RBI fielder's choice and later stole home. Jordan Kosam also bagged an RBI single.

The Ol'Aces went on to move around the two runs needed for the early decision in the fifth inning from a triple by Virgil Secharmidal who later stole home.

Secharmidal also lit up IT&E from the mound and gave up just two hits and three walks with 13 strikeouts through 4 2/3 innings.

He also batted 2-for-3 with an RBI, three runs, two stolen bases, and a base on balls. Calvo swung 3-for-4 with an RBI, a run, and two stolen bases.

JUNIOR DIVISION
Falcons 13, Enforcers 9

The Enforcers managed a run in the first inning, but stumbled out on the field and gave up six runs in the bottom frame off just one hit. The Falcons were granted the green light at third base and made the most of it.

The Falcons added a run in the second off an error and three more in the third off some extra throws and another dose of aggressive base running.

The Enforcers loaded the bases in the top of the fourth and mustered four runs off a plunked batter, an RBI single by Ethan Lizama, and a two-RBI triple by Franklin Lizama.

They then added another four runs to briefly pull behind, 9-10, but the Falcons responded with three runs in the fifth as the Enforcers pitching woes continued to haunt them; Barry Sunumai bagged an RBI single and James Kintaro poked an RBI fielder's choice.

The winning pitcher gave up five earned runs off six hits, three walks, and a bean ball with six strikeouts through four 4 1/3 innings.

Enforcers' Caleb Takao swung 3-for-4 with two runs and a stolen base.

Fielders 12, Lions 0

The Fielders went right to work and rounded up four runs in the first inning off an RBI single by Kainao Wanket and a two RBI double by Jaydrian Camacho. The latter was batted in by Jonathan Camacho.

The Fielders went on to add six more runs off five hits in the second round while its ace pitcher Wanket dealt on the mound.

The Fielders loaded the bases right away and scored off an RBI walk and a passed before Austin Roberto uncorked an RBI base hit. He scored off an error and Jonathan Camacho bagged another RBI single.

The Fielders added a run in the third and threatened the early decision in the fifth inning and Wanket secured his goose egg.

Wanket had a no-hitter broken up with one out in the fifth inning by Logan Martin, but he turned in a very efficient showing with zero walks and seven strikeouts in just 16 total batters faced. He also batted 2-for-3 with an RBI, three runs, three stolen bases , and a base on balls.

KHS

From Page 28

made it on base and stole home to get a run back in the bottom frame, but KHS tacked up five more runs off five hits in the top of the third inning.

Zerah Castro belted an RBI double and later stole the dish. Andrea Camacho, Jenni Dela Cruz, and another Lady Ayuyu also stole home and Lizama bagged another RBI single in the uprising.

KHS pitcher Castro went right at the top of the Lady Dolphins' order and held MHS to just one run in the bottom frame. Shanna Flores hammered a base hit and later stole home.

Then with patience at the plate, the Lady Ayuyus piled on six more runs.

April Welson, Lizama, and Tracy Pelep all recorded hits to go with four walks.

Due to time and light constraints, umpires declared the bottom of the fourth as the Lady Dolphins' last chance to pull out a comeback.

MHS cranked out four hits to start the frame, but managed only two runs before KHS' Castro regrouped to secure the match.

KHS' Lizama batted 3-for-4 with two RBIs and three runs. Castro swung 2-for-2 with an RBI, three runs, and a base on balls.

The season continues at the Tan Ge Field at 4pm on Monday with the Lady Knights of Mount Carmel School debuting against the defending champion Saipan Southern High School Lady Manta Rays (0-1).

BANMI

From Page 28

was held at the Marianas High School Gymnasium from March 26 through March 28.

BANMI would like to thank title sponsors Delta Airlines, Japan-based sponsors Susumu Sakaguchi and Lantech Company Limited, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, and the Division of Youth Services.

The association also extended its gratitude to gold sponsors DFS Saipan Limited and NTT Docomo Pacific; silver sponsors IP&E, Powerade ION 4, Foremost, KSPN2, and KKMP 92.1FM-1440AM; rookie bronze sponsors McDonald's Saipan, J.C. Tenorio Enterprises, Inc., Joeten Superstore, All-Star Sporting Goods, The Athlete's Foot, and Saipan Stevedore Company.

BANMI would also like to send out some special thanks to MHS, its principal Cherlyn Cabrera, teacher James Feger, and MHS Productions; the Office of the Governor and the 18th CNMI Legislature; the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs with Secretary Melvin Faisao and acting secretary Rhonda Nogis; DYS and director Laura Ogumoro; Mayor Donald Flores and the Saipan Mayor's Office; the Marianas Visitors Authority; the CNMI Public School System and Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan, as well as all of the private school principals, administrators, and teachers; United Filipino Organization president Romeo Malasarte and its members; translators Jun Yamagishi and Mamiko Oshima-Berger; CNMI Basketball Development Officer Elias Rangamar; BANMI's very own referees and table officials; Fiesta Resort & Spa; *Saipan Tribune*; *Marianas Variety*; New Majestic Restaurant; Star Sands Plaza-I Heart Saipan; Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods Saipan and Triple J Super Fresh Market; YS Enterprises, LLC; Cultura Atheltics, LLC; Practical Solutions; along with Lawrence Camacho and all of the other volunteers that helped contribute to yet another successful staging of the tournament.

KRISHNAN

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Flores turned in a solid fourth place showing with a net score of 70.

SGA's Mariano Fajardo, Taeck Jung Eun, Rick Kautz, Ed Manibusan, Ray San Nicolas, Ned Norita, Frankie Pangelinan, Frank Castro , and Larry Hocog all recorded a birdie apiece, while newcomers Jesse Atalig (1 handicap) and Juan Lizama boasted three and two birdies, respectively. Steve Balakrishna also sank three birdies despite finishing in the back of the pack.

Closest to the pin winners include Balakrishna in hole No. 6, San Nicolas in hole No. 8, Pangelinan in hole No. 12, and Manibusan in hole No. 15.

Norita swept long ball honors last March with a pair of booming drives on holes No. 7 and 11.

SGA's April Ace event is set for this Sunday at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort's west course; show time is set for 9am with a 10:30am tee off.

TSL SPORTS COMPLEX
Activity Schedule for April 14, 2012
8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices
6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices
NMBA
NORTHERN MARIANAS BADMINTON ASSOCIATION
2012 Tan Holdings Intercompany Basketball League
Semifinals
3:00 PM: D&Q/CTSI vs. Fiesta Resort and Spa
5:00 PM: Saipan Grand Hotel vs. Shirley's Coffee Shop
Gillette
MULTIPURPOSE GYMNASIUM
There are no scheduled games.
SAIPAN SOCCER SCHOOL

Boozer scores 19, Bulls beat Heat in OT

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Saints name Vitt interim coach for 2012 season

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Comets still flawless in Majors

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rep. Joseph P. Guerrero Dandan Comets kept its hopes for a perfect season alive by outrunning the San Vicente A's, 12-6, in their Major Division matchup of the Saipan Little League last Tuesday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan.

Last Saturday, the Attorney Robert T. Torres Law Offices' Kagman Little Legals unleashed a six-run surge in the last inning and overcame the Natibu Sports Association Tanapag Braves, 14-8; Pacific Amusement's Rays defeated the San Vicente A's, 8-3; and the IT&E Ol'Aces shut down IT&E's self-titled squad, 11-0, in five innings.

In Junior Division play at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield, the Natibu Tanapag

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WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Dandan Comets' Ethan Babauta fires a pitch during Tuesday's Major Division matchup against the San Vicente A's at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Kagman High School's Zerah Castro, right, throws out a Marianas High School runner at first base in Wednesday's MISO girls fast-pitch softball game at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

KHS triumphs over MHS in girls fast-pitch softball

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Kagman High School Lady Ayuyus notched their second win of the season, 15-6, over the Marianas High School Lady Dolphins in Wednesday's Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization girls fast-pitch softball game at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

KHS broke a 2-all deadlock from the opening frame with two runs in the second inning. Janica Lizama ripped an RBI single and worked her way around to score.

MHS' Maryann Waing

See KHS on Page 27

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

The Settsu Red Impulse boys pose after the awards ceremony for the 4th Annual Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament held last month.

BANMI thanks supporters of Settsu-Saipan cage tourney

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands would like to express its gratitude to the sponsors and supporting cast that helped make the 4th Annual Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament a great success.

The event featured the Settsu Red Impulse boys and girls squads of Japan compete against some of the best local team on island. The tournament

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Krishnan wins SGA March Ace honors

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Das Krishnan topped a field of 28 to win the Saipan Golfers Association's March Ace after the conclusion of the group's monthly tournament held last March 18 at Kingfisher Golf Links.

Krishnan scratched a 41 on the front nine and finished his round with a 43 on the back side for an 84 gross tally that calculated to a 66 net score.

Danny Quitugua and newcomer James Nelson finished tied for second place with identical 69 net counts, but the former was awarded the nod via a scorecard tiebreaker.

Krishnan and Nelson each bagged a birdie in their rounds.

Notably, newcomer Sonny

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SGA members posed for group photo before hitting the links in their March Ace of the Month tournament held Sunday, March 18 at King Fisher Golf Links.